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AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DILLON S. MYER

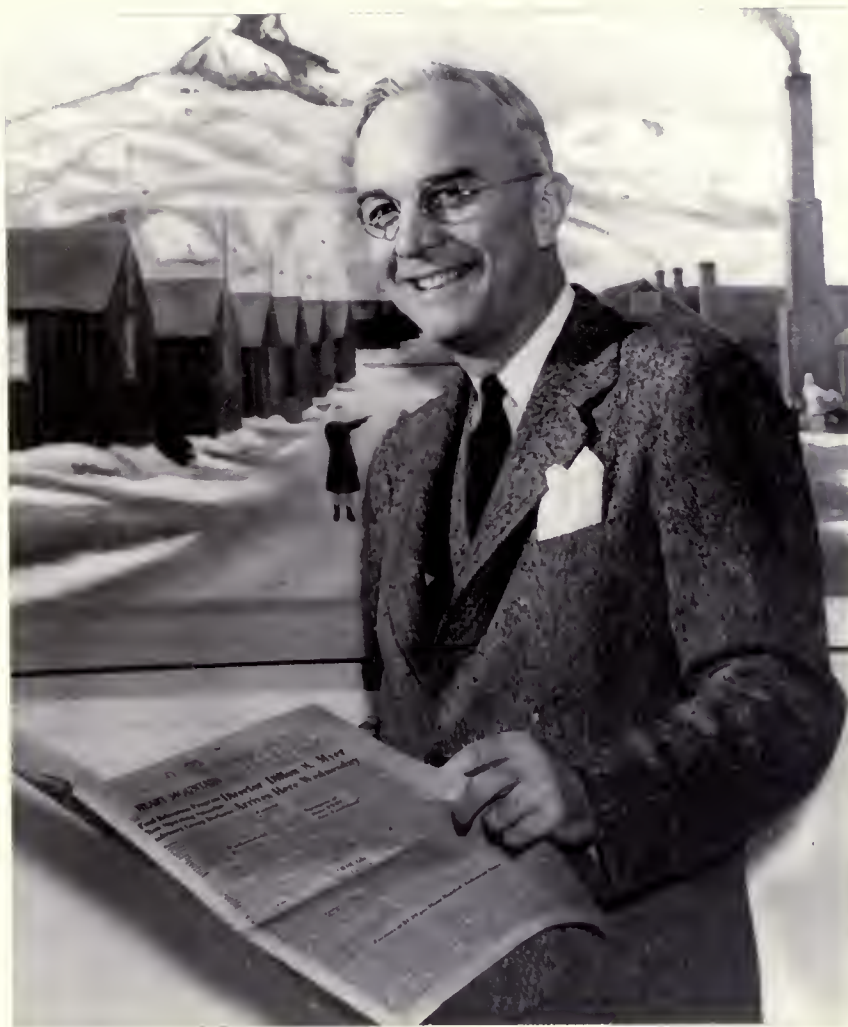




Dillon S. Myer, Director of the War Relocation Authority  
at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center. Center build-  
ings and Heart Mountain in the background.

Dillon S. Myer, Director of the War Relocation Authority  
at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center. Center build-  
ings and Heart Mountain in the background.







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## MANUSCRIPT HISTORY

The following manuscript by Dillon Seymour Myer, government official in the areas of agriculture, the relocation of the Japanese during World War II, federal public housing, inter-American Relations, and Indian affairs, came to the attention of the Regional Oral History Office in the spring of 1968. At that time Mr. Myer was engaged in tape recording his recollections of his many years in government service, a task he took on after completing the writing of The Uprooted Americans on his work in the War Relocation Authority. Mrs. Helen S. Pryor, a friend and retired government employee, was serving as an interested listener and questioner (for Mr. Myer soon found that talking to a tape recorder alone was an awkward and unrewarding process), and Mrs. Pryor had heard of the Regional Oral History Office through Dr. Thelma Dreis, the Office's Washington, D.C., interviewer. The question was raised as to whether The Bancroft Library would be interested in having a copy of the completed manuscript so that it could be made available there for scholarly research?

Mr. Myer had served as director of the War Relocation Authority, 1942-1946, largely a California problem. His work as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs brought him into western U.S. history. As an agronomist, county agricultural agent, and Extension Service supervisor (although in Indiana and Ohio), his career directly complements interviews being carried on by the Regional Oral History Office on agricultural history. The Bancroft Library indicated that it would be delighted to have a copy, and would like to encourage the completion and distribution of the manuscript in every way possible.

Over the following two years letters and several meetings took place between Mr. Myer and Mrs. Pryor, and Mrs. Willa Baum and Mrs. Amelia Fry of the Regional Oral History Office. In the meantime, Mr. Myer completed his painstaking tape recording. He could have stopped there, but he didn't. With admirable persistence, he undertook to find a transcriber, who materialized in the form of his daughter, Margaret Myer McFaddin. Still a do-it-yourself project, he carefully edited the manuscript with full cooperation from Helen Pryor, had it retyped and indexed, provided photographs, and sent a final-typed version to The Bancroft Library in June of 1970 that was so clean and complete that none of it had to be re-done before photocopying it. His work is now available in The Bancroft Library as well as other research libraries which will be requesting copies. In addition, Mr. Myer has given valuable assistance in suggesting and locating other individuals who can give information on other aspects of the wartime Japanese relocation.

The previous November Mr. Myer also recorded with Mrs. Fry an extensive interview on his War Relocation Authority experiences in California and this manuscript will appear as part of the series of interviews in the Earl Warren Oral History Project. The original draft of The Uprooted Americans (University of Arizona Press, 1970), which contains some materials that were deleted from the final publication, has also been donated to The Bancroft Library.

Willa K. Baum, Director  
Regional Oral History Office

20 June 1970  
Regional Oral History Office  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following narrative was started in 1967 as a result of the encouragement of many friends including Helen Pryor who spent many hours over several months serving as the interviewer during the taping period and editing the typed script.

At an early stage of the taping process I weakened and debated whether to continue. My good wife Jenness Wirt Myer urged me to continue, because she wanted the record completed for our three daughters.

We were also encouraged by Mrs. Amelia Fry and Mrs. Willa Baum, of the Regional Oral History Office of the University of California General Library, to complete the taping and the typing of the manuscript.

So it is thanks to my wife Jenness, to Helen Pryor, our good friend, and all of those who urged that we complete the task, that it has been done.

Thanks also to our daughter Margaret Wirt Myer McFaddin for spending many long hours typing the taped story.

Dillon S. Myer

1 June 1970  
3025 Daniel Lane  
Washington, D.C.



## FOREWORD - A BRIEF FAMILY HISTORY

Like many Americans, my interest in and curiosity about my family's history lay dormant until my later years, when, unfortunately, no one of an earlier generation is left to question about the family tree. From the scanty information available, I know that my father's great-great-grandfather was a German tutor, who left Germany with his wife and two sons for the United States. One can only conjecture that this was in the middle or late eighteenth century.

According to family legend, their ship - a sailing vessel, of course - was wrecked somewhere off the coast of Maryland and the father and mother were lost, along with the gold that they had. The two boys reached shore, and being destitute, they bound themselves out, a customary procedure in those days. The duration of their servitude is unknown; in fact, the interim history is unknown to me until my Grandfather Myer and his brother migrated from Allegheny County, Maryland, to Licking County, Ohio, during the early eighteen thirties. In 1834 they bought farm lands on the banks of what is now Buckeye Lake.

The land was owned by the U.S. Government and the sheepskin deed bearing that date was signed by President Andrew Jackson. A portion of the land purchased at that time is still a part of the John Hyson Myer estate and the sheepskin deed is still a Myer keepsake. The land is now owned by the third generation heirs of my father, John Hyson Myer.

My Grandmother Myer was Mary Oldaker. She was born in Virginia in the upper part of the Shenendoah Valley which is now a part of West Virginia, in 1818, and she and her family moved to Ohio by horseback when she was just a girl. We still have some of the antique dining room chairs in the family that were brought to Ohio by horseback. My Grandmother's father and my great Grandfather Oldaker was a millwright and evidently traveled about to build mills and mill wheels in different locations.





My Grandmother married Jacob Myer, my Grandfather, at age forty-two. She was his second wife and she must have been several years younger than he was. My father, an only child, was born in 1861 when Grandmother was forty-three years old. His father Jacob Myer died in 1866 when Dad was only five years old. My widowed Grandmother was left with a young son and a farm to look after. It seems that portions of the farmland were still swampy and undeveloped. At the time my father, as a young man, took over the management, debts had accumulated due in part to poor management and in part to post-Civil War depression.

Consequently when he was married in 1887 at the age of twenty-six he and my mother took on the debts and added to them the cost of remodeling the house. The remodeling job was largely a new structure built around and encompassing a portion of the old house which was originally a log structure.

My Mother was Harriet Estella Seymour before her marriage. She was born in 1864. Her parents were Bruce and Elizabeth Seymour.

When her father and mother were first married they moved to Tippecanoe County, Indiana, near Lafayette which was frontier country in the early eighteen fifties. Their first son was born there but they moved back to Ohio in about 1856 and built a log house on the raw land that had been secured from the government. They later built a frame house and as a child during the 1890's I remember the old log house which was far back on the farm and was then used to shelter livestock.

Mother had two sisters and four brothers, all of whom, with one exception, lived to be eighty-two years of age or older.

My Mother lived to be ninety-four years and ten months of age and an older sister Aunt Mate who lived with us during her late years lived to be one hundred and two.

The Seymours were of Scotch-English descent but I know very little about the family before my Grandfather except that they were early settlers in Licking County, Ohio and lived not far from Newark, Ohio.



My Grandmother Seymour was a Lees and her parents were English. Evidently my great Grandfather Lees was Cockney English and still had the cockney accent when Mother was a girl.

My Father died in 1941 at age eighty.

I have one brother who manages the home farm and estate who is now eighty-one and two younger sisters, Mrs. Don Tobin of Columbus, Ohio, and Mrs. George Eikenberry of Cambridge, Ohio.





Wedding portrait of Mr. and Mrs. John  
H. Myer, parents of Dillon S. Myer.  
1887.



Dillon Myer, a college graduate in 1914,  
aged 22 years.



Dillon Myer, aged 5 years on the left,  
and his brother Ernest, aged 8 years.



## CHAPTER I

### GROWING UP ON THE FARM IN THE 1890's AND EARLY 1900's

DSM: I was born and reared on a typical corn belt farm of 135 acres in central Ohio in a family of four; one older brother and two younger sisters. My pre-college days lay entirely within the horse and buggy era and before automobiles and tractors were generally used. Consequently communication was not easy between communities.

One of my very earliest memories has to do with a visit that we made to some relatives of my father, by the name of Myer, in the northern part of Licking County. It was a large county, and I must have been only two years old, possibly three.

During that visit I wandered away from the family and out into the yard where some bee hives were located. Being quite young and inexperienced I didn't know what bee hives were. It seems that I picked up a corn cob and was beating on the hives, and the bees, of course, swarmed around me and stung me rather badly. One of the older girls in the family, when she sensed what was going on, picked me up and carried me out of the range of the bees. Another sister ran into the garden, pulled up some green onions, brought them back, cut them up, and put the green onions on the stings which helped to alleviate the soreness. I suppose it had something to do with stopping the poison. I have found, throughout the years, that this is an antidote for bee stings. This experience was so vivid that it happens to be, I think, the first thing that I can recall.

I can still remember what those bee hives looked like. They were painted white, and they were just about my height because I think they had put what we know as supers on top of some of the hives. As





a consequence when I think of bee hives, I think of that kind of bee hive that I saw at that stage. It was a square bee hive.

I learned from that experience that onions were a good antidote for bee stings. Years later, when my youngest daughter was about five, we had moved to Falls Church, Virginia, and I was working out in the yard one nice sunny day and had mowed the yard. I sat down to talk to somebody when she came rushing out and plopped down beside me, putting both hands on the grass as she sat down, and she put one hand right down on a honey bee. I had my knife in my pocket and I immediately pulled up a wild onion, which was easy to do because we had lots of them, and cut one in two and put it on the palm of her hand, which had been stung, and said "Close your hand and hold it for a little bit," which she did. As a consequence she had no after effects from the bee sting.

There are two other early memories that may be interesting. One of them had to do with the cutting of my curls. In those days little boys, as well as little girls, wore curls until they were at least four or five years old. I don't remember a great deal about mine except that I do remember that I was told to go and look at my curls in the looking glass for the last time. And crazily enough I remember getting a chair and moving it in front of the looking glass, which I had to do because I wasn't tall enough to see in the glass otherwise, and took a last look at my curls before they were whacked off.

The other incident was not one that I like to recall. Nevertheless it was an incident of some importance in my younger days. My Father was preparing to plant potatoes in the spring of the year and he found that he did not have enough seed potatoes to plant the ground that he had in mind; so he asked my brother and me to go to a neighbor's, who lived at least three quarters of a mile away, and ask him if we could borrow a few seed potatoes to finish out the job. My brother was eight years old and I was five. So we hied across the fields.



When we arrived at Mr. Bert Neel's place Mrs. Neel said she was sorry but that Mr. Neel wasn't there just then, but he would be back after a little bit and why didn't we go with Minnie, her daughter, down to see the deer which Mr. Neel had brought back from a hunting trip and had put into a deer lot that he had built. Of course, this was very intriguing. So we spent some time watching the deer and playing about until Mr. Neel returned.

We finally got the potatoes and took them home. When we arrived home we found my Father in a rage because he had been waiting for quite some time. He had told us to hurry and we had not hurried. So he cut a peach switch and gave us both a switching.

It just so happens that I had on my first pair of little boy short pants which my Mother had made with her own hands. They were a beautiful blue and to get a switching the first time I wore these pants was bad business as far as Mother was concerned. I remember very distinctly that she wept some tears which, I think, was the only time in her life that she wept when I was punished.

When I was five, my brother, of course, had already been in school for some time, having started at age six. I was very much interested in learning to read. So my Father, who at times had great patience, taught me to read in the first reader, McGuffey's First Reader as a matter of fact.

So by the time I started school, at age six, I was able to avoid the so-called chart class, which they had in those days. I remember taking very great pleasure during the first years in school in watching the chart class stand up in front of the chart with the teacher with a pointer, spelling out C-A-T, R-A-T, D-O-G and all the simple words, and thinking I was awfully glad I hadn't had to go through that.



## The Country School

DSM: We went to a one-room country school which was at least a mile, probably one and one half miles, from home. We walked to school and home again each school day except in times of very bad weather. Occasionally in the wintertime, if we had a blizzard or a heavy snow and the snow was deep, Dad would take us on horseback with the two of us riding behind him. He would drop us off and then maybe come for us in the afternoon if the storm continued.

A little later on he decided it wasn't necessary for him to go so when we got old enough he allowed us to ride old "Queen" which was one of our driving horses. He put a blanket on her, strapped it on and we two would ride to school where we would tie the reins up, turn her loose, and she would go home, which of course was easier than walking in heavy snow when the snow was hard to plod through.

One of my earliest memories, in my first few weeks of school, was the fact that we had a lady teacher by the name of Lottie Horn who lived just across the road from the school; a very lovely person. One morning I felt that I needed to go very badly to what we would call the bathroom nowadays, the toilet, and I held up my hand. She very sweetly said "We will have recess in a few minutes. I think you can wait." Well, I couldn't wait. As a consequence I flooded the area and she sent me home for a change of clothes. She was very contrite and I never had any problem after that when I held up my hand.

We had Miss Horn for a period of a couple of years. Then we had a man teacher, by the name of Mac Mossman, who only lasted a year. Unfortunately, I turned out to be teacher's pet under Mac Mossman which embarrassed me no end because I didn't care for him and none of the students did. He was always saying something that embarrassed me such





as "Would a good little boy put some coal in the stove?", or something of that kind.

One of the things that I remember about Mac Mossman was that he chewed scrap tobacco. He kept his tobacco in the coal house and the door was just behind the teacher's desk. One noon, when he had gone away temporarily, a bunch of us boys got into the coal house, found his tobacco and scattered it all over the coal so that he would have had to pick it up bit by bit. We also found some switches which he had cut for use on the older boys if they got out of hand. We ringed those with a knife so that if he did use them they would break into pieces.

HP: Did fellow students kid you about being "the good little boy?"

DSM: Oh sure. That is what irked me. I didn't mind being the good little boy but I didn't like being kidded about it.

Our next teacher was the one that was a real teacher, and who was there the rest of my time in elementary school or country school. I went to country school, by the way, from age 6 to age 14. Mr. Harvey Orr was an excellent teacher.

As I remember it, I think I learned as much from listening to the older scholars reciting their lessons as I did from reciting my own. We had long recitation benches in the front of the room and they were called up to do their reading or their language or their arithmetic or what not. Of course, in a one-room school everything is open to everybody. I remember quite distinctly listening to many many recitations and repetitions of reading lessons, reading of poems, reading of prose, and so on, out of the old McGuffey Readers.

After I had been in school for quite some time, during my last two years, I was the only scholar in what would now be called seventh and eighth grade. Consequently, the teacher was able to devote a great deal of time to one student.





Fortunately, he was a man of some learning and some imagination. He did such things as to provide extra work which was not in the curriculum. For example, he provided a course in orthography, which was a course on the origin of words. This has been very helpful to me throughout the years.

During my last year or two in school we read Shakespeare part of the time. We read such Shakespearean plays as "A Winter's Tale", "The Merchant of Venice", "Midsummer Night's Dream", and one or two others.

I also remember that there was no school library in those days, but Mr. Orr felt that there should be one so he, with his own hands, built a bookcase which could be locked and put it in one corner of the schoolroom. He brought his own library to the school; allowed us to take out books; take them home to read; and, of course, they were also properly returned. This was quite an unusual thing in those early days.

In those days, the country school teacher got a very small salary. I'm sure that Harvey Orr received only \$30 a month when he started teaching and never more than \$40 during a school year. He provided his own house. There were no fringe benefits, except occasionally if he didn't want to go home and it was bad weather, somebody in the neighborhood, usually it was the Myers, provided a place for him to stay all night and provided some meals.

There was a time, previous to this, when many of the country teachers "boarded around" but he didn't "board around." He lived at a place called Jacksontown which was about three and a half or four miles away. He drove every morning and put his horse in the barn, at the neighbor's across the way. He had a family of at least three children whom I can remember. They went to school in their own community. He raised truck crops during the summer to supplement his wages.

HP: He sold them?



DSM: Yes. He peddled his crops at Buckeye Lake among the summer cottagers.

We had an eight months school in those days. He got \$240 a year, and later he got \$320 a year.

HP: Had he been to college?

DSM: No. I'm sure he hadn't been to college. He was pretty much self-educated beyond the common schools. I'm not sure that he had been to high school because they didn't have many country high schools in those days, but he was a great reader. He believed in good literature. He believed in a sound basic education, and he was a wonderful teacher. I was most fortunate that I was able to have him for a period of five years of my country or elementary schooling.

One other incident that I remember about Harvey Orr: In the state of Ohio we had the Patterson Examinations or Boxwell Examinations. If you passed an examination, which was given on a county-wide basis, you could go to high school of your choice and have your tuition paid. Well, I took the examination. It just so happened that Harvey Orr, along with two other teachers from around the county, was one of the three examiners who supervised the exams.

Much to my amazement, about three or four weeks after the examinations were given, Harvey Orr drove his horse and buggy into our place one day and turned around. My Dad went out to talk to him and then he called me. When I went out he presented me with a book, which as I remember was "The Seven Wonders of the World", and the book was a reward for having won the top grade in the county in mathematics. I smile every time I think of this because it was the last time I ever won a top grade in mathematics. I didn't do too well in Algebra and Geometry in high school and I took no mathematics when I went to college. I saw to it that I avoided mathematics.



I ought to go back, I think, to the period of Mac Mossman for a moment to recall one rather important and exciting incident. At least it was exciting for most of the youngsters.

He got all excited one day and rushed all of us outside with the statement that the greatest invention of the age was coming up the road. When we got outside and lined up in front of the school house, here came Mr. Dave Black of Newark, Ohio, in his "one-lunger" automobile with a dashboard and, of course, with the kind of handle that you had in those days instead of a steering wheel. He had on a linen duster, a cap with goggles, and all of the gear of the early day automobilist. It happens that I had seen Dave Black before in his automobile because he occasionally came out to the reservoir, which was near our place. But most of the kids had not. It must have been around 1899, because I was just a youngster. I don't think I was over eight years old at that time.

In those days, of course, when you drove the team hitched to the surrey to church on Sunday and you met an automobile, which wasn't often, you got out and held the horses by their heads while it passed, to keep them from jumping over the fence.

Much of the social life in my early days, during the country school period, revolved around the school or around the church. The school social life had to do mainly with such things as box socials. This, of course, was a social where the ladies and the girls each brought a box, which they had packed themselves, and then these boxes were auctioned off. The men and the boys bid for the box. One of the ways to make money for the school was to find one or more who wanted a certain girl's box and were willing to bid for it and it went up sometimes to enormous sums such as \$1.50 or \$2.00, which was a lot of money in those days.

HP: What was in the box? Food?

DSM: Yes, food. There was food in the boxes.

HP: What was considered a good box?





DSM: Oh, sandwiches and cake or fried chicken -- the kind of thing that was easy to pack in a box and, of course, it was a picnic type of meal.

Another school affair, which was quite general in those days, was the spelling bee. Nearly everybody in the community attended and some of the older folks participated.

### Family Life

DSM: Spelling was a very important matter in our family. We used to have spelling bees around the supper table, after we had finished our evening meal, and my Dad and my Mother enjoyed them, I'm sure, more than we did, at that time, because they were good spellers and they wanted to be sure that we would be.

HP: How did you do it? Did you have a spelling book that your Father would read from?

DSM: Oh, no. Normally they would just remember words they had spelled throughout the years and they would give them to us to spell. They would pronounce them and we would do the spelling. I remember one that Dad always enjoyed using was the volcano in Mexico which he called "Popocātapetal" which in Spanish is pronounced "Popocatēpetl." He thought that was great fun to throw this one out at us because he had, I think, gotten stuck on it in a spelling bee at sometime or other. These home spelling bees, as I said, took place after supper in the dining room.

My Mother, in particular, was very interested in seeing to it that her youngsters knew how to speak the English language. She was very careful to correct us if we didn't pronounce words properly. She was very insistent that we study our language and grammar lessons. If need be, she was helpful,





for she knew a good deal about grammar and language because she was interested in it. Of course, as I have already indicated, she was very interested in seeing to it that we knew how to spell. This, I'm sure, was helpful, not only at that time but in later life because it was drummed into us day after day.

In the same way, as I began to grow up, she would slap me on the shoulder blades every time I passed and tell me to straighten up so that I wouldn't be stooped, as tall boys very often are.

HP: Describe how it was around the dinner table. Was it in the kitchen or the dining room?

DSM: We always ate in the dining room. Our kitchen was small and we had a fair-sized dining room. We ate all our meals in the dining room.

HP: Did your Mother use a white table cloth?

DSM: Oh yes. Occasionally, during the week, we would use a white-and-red-squared tablecloth but usually it was white. Mother believed in white tablecloths.

My Dad sat at the head of the table and always gave the blessing and, if somebody had been particularly bad or some incident had stirred him up, sometimes he ran on and on. Sometimes we would glance at each other and think "Boy, are we getting it on the chin." But usually it was very short and very sweet.

HP: What sort of grace would he say?

DSM: He would ask for a blessing on the food, and bless the members of the family. If he felt other people should be blessed he would bring them in too.

Mother sat across the table from me, which was at my Dad's left; my brother sat next to me; my Grandmother Myer sat at the other end of the table; and then the two young girls sat next to Mother on the other side of the table.



HP: I wonder why your Grandmother sat at the end. Was it near the kitchen for your Mother to get up or did she sit on the side or what?

DSM: Grandmother always considered that this was her house. My father was the only boy in her family. She married a widower who had lost his first wife. He was older than she was and Dad was born when she was 43 years of age in 1861. He was the only child she ever had. She wasn't married until she was 42. So when Dad got married Mother came into their home and I might say she had a very tough life until my Grandmother's death many years later.

HP: Did you realize this as a child?

DSM: Oh yes, many times. Every so often Dad would take Grandmother into the living room; close the doors; and we were barred for two or three hours, while they argued out something that had to be argued because Mother had gotten to the end of her rope.

Grandmother sat at the end of the table because she probably always had sat there before Mother came on to the scene. I don't know. In any case, it was accepted.

HP: Was there ever argument in front of you children, or how did you know that your Mother was unhappy about her Mother-in-Law?

DSM: We knew that Mother was unhappy at times by her attitude mainly, and occasional comments.

HP: Was your Grandmother bossy or critical or what?

DSM: Grandmother liked to take over and to run things. She was always wanting to do things which sometimes were in Mother's way. Her final act, that led up to her demise, happened while Dad and Mother and all of us had gone away. She decided to do some ironing, which she wasn't supposed to do, and she fell over a threshold of the door and broke her hip. She was in bed for a year and she got well enough that she got up to walk some but died from



uremic poisoning from being bedfast so long. She was 94 years of age at the time of her death.

Generally speaking Grandmother was good to us. She was for the most part kindly. There were certain times when she tried to manage us. We didn't care for that but she was usually good to us.

One of the things that I remember very well was that she had begun to develop cataracts as she got older and she couldn't thread her own needles. I think I threaded hundreds of needles for Grandmother when I was a kid. Everytime she needed a new threading I was available. I was the one who did the threading for one reason or another.

One other thing that we helped her do was to find her spectacles. About half the time they were pushed up on top of her head where she had forgotten she had put them.

HP: There was nothing that could be done for cataracts in those days?

DSM: Well, at least nothing was done. I don't remember. I suppose they were not operable in those days. I don't think they had developed the techniques but I'm not sure about that.

Another thing that I was always called on to help Grandmother do was to pick greens in the spring. She loved greens. We picked dandelion, narrow dock, lambs quarter, and what have you. I have forgotten some of the others but, oh yes, horseradish leaves.

I might say she also loved horseradish and every so often I had to help her dig horseradish root and helped to grate it which, of course, brought tears to the eyes.

HP: Grated raw?

DSM: Yes. I still like horseradish in spite of the discomforting experience.



### Household and Farm Chores

DSM: Youngsters growing up on a farm in those days were expected to help with the farm chores just as soon as they were able. In my own case the first chores allotted to me were the gathering of eggs and the carrying in of kindling wood for the kitchen stove and the heating stove. At that stage, I didn't have to cut the kindling but I did have to carry it in. A little later I was expected to fill the wood box in the kitchen.

HP: From the first grade age or even before that?

DSM: Yes. I started doing both chores when I was around five.

HP: Did you have a basket or a bucket to put the eggs in?

DSM: Oh yes, and occasionally, of course, there were broken eggs.

HP: Did you ever break any?

DSM: Oh sure.

Following the period when I began to cut the kindling, to gather it and to carry in the wood to fill the wood boxes, I unfortunately decided that I'd like to learn to milk; so at age seven I started milking. I was never relieved of the task until I left home at age 22 after I had finished college.

HP: Can a seven year old really milk?

DSM: Sure, I did.

HP: Were your hands big enough?

DSM: Oh yes. I didn't milk some of the cows at first because their teats were a little large for seven-year-old hands but I could milk most of them. My







brother didn't like to milk so he took care of the horse stables and the horse barns which he loved. I had to do the cow barns, which I resented throughout the years, but there wasn't anything I could do about it. The pattern was already fixed.

Other chores during this period had to do with feeding the stock, both in the barns and in the lots. We put fodder out for them after we turned them out from the barns.

HP: Everyday?

DSM: We fed them twice a day. In the morning and evening, and the cleaning of stables was done once a day, including putting down new bedding.

HP: Every day?

DSM: This was routine every day during the winter.

We didn't keep them in the barns during the summer. Normally you turned them out at night, and just let the cows in long enough to milk.

The horses were brought in to curry and to harness. During the season when we used teams the currying and harnessing of horses to get them ready for the field was a chore before breakfast every morning. This was in addition to the other chores. The horses had to be ready to go when the signal was given after breakfast.

The worst chore that I ever had, and one that I still don't like to think about but which I can still do, was the sawing and splitting of wood for both the cook stove and the heating stoves. This went on from fall until spring. All winter long. Any time we had left before school, we got out the crosscut saw and sawed off a few chunks of wood.

HP: How far away was the wood?

DSM: The wood yard was right between the house and the barn.



HP: Even in bad weather?

DSM: Oh yes. Unless the weather was awfully bad, we sawed wood or split wood and carried in wood; both before and after school and, of course, on Saturdays. Most of the day on Saturdays during the winter months we sawed, split and carried wood. We didn't use much wood during the summer. We had stored enough and stocked enough in cords to carry us through the summer for cooking and the wash house.

HP: How big were the logs?

DSM: Some of the logs were two or three feet in diameter. We took down trees and would haul the logs up to the wood yard. We usually sawed them up there. On Saturday we sometimes sawed the wood in the woods and loaded the chunks onto the wagon or sled and hauled them up and dumped them into the wood yard.

We had enough logs right at hand so that before and after school we always had plenty to saw on. They ranged anywhere from a foot in diameter to two or three feet in diameter. Some of them were pretty knotty such as elm, beech, and oak. Certain parts of those trees didn't split very easily. I have always wished we could have had wood like they have on the West Coast such as fir and some of that beautiful straight grained wood. I still would like to take an ax and split some of it just for the pleasure of knowing how it felt to split wood without knots in it.

HP: It must be easier to split then.

DSM: Very much, yes.

HP: And every bit of fuel in the house? What did you use for illumination? Kerosene?

DSM: Kerosene lamps were used entirely for illumination.

Outside of kerosene in the lamps, every bit of fuel used in the house was prepared by the three



"men" of the family, and a occasional "hired man."  
We used wood until we got free gas.

Speaking of kerosene lamps, that was another chore that I had to help my Grandmother with. My Grandmother always cleaned the lamps, refilled them and cleaned the wicks on Saturday when I was available. So I helped to clean the lamps, clean the chimneys, snuff the wicks, fill the lamps with "coal oil" as kerosene was called, wipe them off again, and to get them back into their proper place in the house.

HP: Did you ever get a kerosene cook stove?

DSM: No. Fortunately, we never had a kerosene cook stove. I hate the smell of kerosene to this day.

HP: How many lamps were there?

DSM: As I remember it, we had a couple of lamps in the kitchen; one on each side of the kitchen that hung in brackets. We had, usually, a couple in the living room and, of course, we had one or two in the dining room. We had a beautiful lamp in the parlor, tall lamp with a big globe with flowers on it,

HP: Standing or hanging?

DSM: Standing. the kind that you put in the middle of the table. It had a smaller chimney than the others that came up through the beautiful flowered china globe.

HP: Is it still in there?

DSM: No. I don't know what happened to it. It's been gone for quite some time. I don't know where it went.

HP: Then when you went to bed did you carry a lamp upstairs with you?

DSM: No. We kids usually went to bed without a light. If we needed a light, we had a lamp in each of the rooms.



Grandmother most often carried a lamp upstairs with her because she didn't see too well. During the wintertime, she also carried her soapstone wrapped in a piece of blanket or a hot flat iron, if the soapstone wasn't handy. She would turn her bed clothes back and iron the bed or smooth the bed with the hot iron or soapstone before she crawled in and then she put the soapstone at her feet. If we were ill with a cold, we usually got a soapstone or an iron at our feet. Otherwise we crawled into a cold bed.

We hadn't any heat upstairs excepting that in Dad and Mother's room, a large room upstairs; they had put a radiator, a sort of drum with vents in it, on the pipe from the stove downstairs. This threw a little more heat into that room but the other rooms were just plain cold. There was no reading in bed in those days.

### The Miracle of Free Gas

DSM: Illumination by gas light and the doing away with wood sawing and wood cutting had to await the arrival of free gas, which happened when they began to drill gas wells throughout our community. They found some gas and before we had a well of our own, they wanted to come across our place with a gas line which would supply gas to Buckeye Lake Park which was then developing. As a result of wanting that right-of-way, we were able to get free gas for years for two houses; for the tenant house and for our main house.

HP: For illumination and heat both?

DSM: We used it for heat, and illumination.

HP: Cooking?

DSM: And cooking. It was one of the greatest things that ever happened to me as a kid.





HP: I'll bet. At what age did this happen?

DSM: I think I was around twelve when the gas field began to open up and, as a consequence, there was no more wood sawing by the time we were ready to start to high school.

We put in a furnace and had central heat. All you had to do was turn on the gas, light a match, throw it in and boom! away it went. I'll tell you that was a thrill, a real thrill.

We had a barnyard light, at that time, with free gas. We didn't burn it like some people did as a open flame; we put mantles on ours. That was the beginning of an easier life.



## CHAPTER II

### FARM OPERATIONS

DSM: Other than the farm chores, the seasonal farm work, the field work which we did throughout my young life, we did such off-season work as cutting weeds in grain fields and pastures, such as dock and mullein; in the wheat fields very often you would find wild mustard which had to be pulled; hoeing in the garden; the weedy spots in the corn field had to be hoed. We helped with that along with my Dad and the hired man.

Land preparation, including plowing with walking plows, harrowing either with spiked tooth or disk harrows, dragging or rolling prior to planting; all this came with growing up.

HP: I suppose it was unthinkable to say "Well, I don't like this kind of work. I want to be a school-teacher" or something like that.

DSM: It never occurred to anybody at that age to say "I don't like this kind of work" because Dad would have said "That's just too bad."

Speaking of this, I was hauling hay shocks as a very small kid. We used to haul hay shocks up to the stackers; some people called them hay doodles. You would take one horse and a rope and you would run the rope around the bottom of the shock so you could drag it up to the stack for the men to pitch it up onto the stack.

I got very tired one day and the horse that I was riding was bothered by nit flies. She kept throwing her head, and it bothered me. On one of my trips to the stack I complained about the head tossing to the pitchers, and one of them said, "Oh, that's nothing to worry about," and as he unhitched



the rope from the shock he gave Queen, the mare I was riding, a whack on the rump with his fork handle. She started in a gallop which increased in speed, and about half way down the field I bounced off, but held on to one hame for a bit, but I finally dropped to the ground and the horse galloped right over me. I just laid there until the hired man came running over and said "Jump up; you're not hurt." So I jumped up and sure enough my pride was the only thing hurt.

They corralled Queen, and then my Dad went and got an old nag called "Old Doll", that belonged to a neighbor. She was sway backed and didn't have enough stamina to toss her head around. I had to ride her the rest of the day but he rewarded me by saying "I will give you a nickel if you will finish out the day." The nickel was important. It is the only reward of that kind that I can remember, but it was a very important nickel.

HP: You were a contributing member to the farm economy almost from the time you could walk.

DSM: Oh yes, almost from the time we could walk.

Other farm tasks included cultivating corn and potatoes either with a single cultivator, with a one-horse cultivator, or a double cultivator which used a team and straddled the rows; harvesting of hay, wheat, corn, potatoes and occasionally barley or oats, if we were growing those, which we didn't do every year.

Hay harvest in the early days included machine mowing; tedding, in order to help the hay to dry; raking with either a wooden dump rake, which you walked behind and raised the handle up enough so that the rake would catch and flop over and leave a wind row; or a little later we used a sulky rake. It was a horse drawn rake which was self dumping, if you tripped it at the right time with your foot. This was an improvement.

HP: I've never known what a wind row is.



DSM: A wind row is the row of hay that is left after you have raked it up. Usually you put it in rows. You try to line it up. You dumped it each time as you came around so that there were long rows so that we could drive your wagon right down beside them and load them; or you could shock the hay more easily with pitch forks.

HP: It has nothing to do with being a wind break?

DSM: No. Where it got its name wind row I don't know. It is one of those things I have wondered about but I never have looked up and no one has ever told me.

Shocking, or as some people called it doodling, you did with pitch forks out of the wind row. You built shocks which were about as high as a normal individual and sloped the sides so that if it rained it shed the rain. Most of the hay in those days had a good deal of timothy in it. Even though it was a clover meadow they put timothy with it and it was very easy to shock.

As I have already indicated after the shocks had been in the field for a while to mature a bit and dry out thoroughly, they were hauled to a stack by boys on horseback to be pitched onto a stack by pitchers.

Stacking was usually done by somebody who knew how to stack hay; who had a lot of experience; and who knew how to make the right bulges and draw it in at the right time. Very often if they didn't do it right the stack would fall over. It would start leaning and over it would go.

HP: How big is a stack?

DSM: Well, it all depends. If we had lots of hay we ricked it. A rick is a long stack with a narrow ridge along the top equal to a double or triple stack.

An individual stack was built on a wooden bottom. We always used rails to set it on. We





would lay down a square of rails and build our stack on that. It was rounded and then pointed out at the top.

HP: To keep it off the ground?

DSM: The rails would keep it off the ground. It would rot on the ground if rails were not used.

HP: And then was it left out all winter?

DSM: It was also a good arrangement so we could poke the rabbits out from under those haystacks.

It was left out all winter or until you were ready to use it. If it was ricked, you usually used the hay fork and cut down through it and hauled in a portion as you had space for it in the mow. Usually you still had stacks available when spring came. If you had any left over you usually sold it if there was a good prospect for another year.

HP: Was the mow the loft of the barn?

DSM: That's right. The hay mow is the loft of the barn.

In those days we had room for stabling cows and horses but we had very little mow room so we didn't put in a great deal of hay. Most of it was stacked out.

I have already indicated that one of the early jobs was hauling hay shocks to the people who were the pitchers at the stacks, either for my Dad at home or for neighbors. The first money I ever remember earning was at the rate of twenty-five cents a day for hauling hay shocks for the neighbors.

HP: How long a day?

DSM: We worked from 7:30 in the morning until dark or thereabouts. A ten hour day, at least, if they had that many shocks to haul and they usually did. Your bottom got pretty sore by the time the



day was over because you were riding a horse all day long with some harness on it.

HP: You rode a horse and dragged?

DSM: Oh sure. They had a man in the field who did the hitching for you. You went back and forth all day long hauling in one shock at a time.

HP: You didn't have to get down off the horse? You just stayed on?

DSM: We stayed right on the horse. However, if we did not have enough extra help as we got a little older, we older boys would sometimes jump off the horse and do our own hitching.

After the twenty-five cents per day I did have two or three years when I got fifty cents a day for either carrying water or hauling hay shocks.

HP: And this was your own money?

DSM: This was my own money. It was important money because it was mine.

Then about 1906, I can't remember exactly, but I think it was about the time I started high school, we talked my father into building a barn. Everybody else was building barns having big hay mows. The new barn had not only a hay fork on a track which was able to pick up hay in large lots, dump it into the mow and with very little work on the part of the people in the mow, it could be stored away in rather large lots.

This led to the purchase of a mechanical hay loader, which meant that we took the hay right out of the swaths; the loader picked it up by a system of revolving rakes; brought it up onto the wagon; and if you would allow it to do so, would push it far enough forward that you didn't have to do much loading. The first year we got it my brother and myself nearly killed ourselves trying to keep the hay out of the mouth of the loader but it wasn't necessary. We learned after



a while to let the team push it forward. It got a little heavy for them but we just kept it on the wagon. That's about all.

The hay had to dry enough that it would not spoil in the mow. But with a hay loader, my brother and I usually did the gathering of the hay in the field and took it in. We usually ran two wagons. We would take the team off one wagon and hitch it to an empty one, which they had just emptied by the use of the hay fork, and we kept hay coming on.

My Dad would stick the hay fork and drop the hay in the mow, and the hired man, and if we had an extra hand two of them, mowed it away. This meant that the labor force during hay harvest was reduced very drastically. There was a time when we had as many as eight or ten men working in harvest but with four men we could do a pretty good job. We could even do it with three if we had to.

We finally got to the place that one of our old farm horses didn't need somebody to ride him to haul the hay up. He would go out and when he heard the car with the hay fork, with a load on it, click on the track, he'd start swinging and come back up and turn around.

HP: Was this almost the beginning of the mechanization on farms?

DSM: It was as far as we were concerned. Well, with this exception. During the younger days of my Father and Mother mechanical binders and mechanical mowing machines came in. They could remember the time when much of the hay was cut with scythes. The grain was cut with what they called cradles, which were nothing more than scythes with some hoops or arms on them to help lay the grain over in swaths. They remembered that period.

My Mother, as a girl, used to drive what was called the self rake reaper which, when they cut





wheat, had sweeps on it that went around. It had a platform and the cutter bar, like a cutter bar on a mowing machine, and it would cut it and the sweeps would come around and sweep it off onto the ground where the people who did the binding of the sheaves would come along and bind them by hand afterwards. By the time I arrived on the scene, we had grain binders and the first job my brother and I did in the harvesting of wheat was to gather sheaves, because our grain binder did not have a sheaf carrier on it.

Just after it was bound it was kicked off and dropped. They were dropped one by one as they went along. In order to make it easier for the men, and to speed up the operation, we gathered sheaves and laid them in a circle. We carried them in by hand so that the shockers could come along and shock them more easily,

HP: It must have been dusty work.

DSM: It wasn't too dusty at that stage. Threshing was dusty but that kind of work wasn't too dusty. It was prickly but before long we got a new binder with a sheaf carrier on it and with a foot trip you could carry six or eight sheaves at a time and as you came around you'd drop them in the same area so you didn't have to have boys carrying sheaves as we used to do. Boys on a farm in those days were a very important economic asset and many, many farmers in those days had a big family of boys.

HP: If you had a hired man was he a single man; or a man with a family?

DSM: In the early days he was always a single man. He lived in the house with us, in one of the bedrooms. Then later we built a tenant house about the time I was about thirteen or fourteen. The hired man, who had worked for us when I was younger, and his wife, came to live in the tenant house as our first tenants. He had worked meantime in a stove foundry and I reckon he decided he liked farming better.





HP: Where would you get other extra help?

DSM: We had extra help that lived up near Buckeye Lake, which was in those days the Licking Reservoir, people who did fishing and odd jobs. We had quite a little community of what we called snake hunters. The origin of this name was not known by my generation. They were people that lived around the edge of the lake and made part of their living out of the lake. They were nearly always available for hay harvest, and for other harvest work such as working as pitchers in the field at threshing time and other odd jobs.

HP: How would you get the word to them?

DSM: When we needed them, my Father would send one of us boys up to tell them that we were ready to start work.

HP: Do you recall what they were paid?

DSM: Yes. Pay started at a \$1.00 a day, and later rose to \$1.50 and finally \$2.00 and \$2.50 a day. We occasionally hired boys from town. I remember Dad started paying them seventy-five cents a day but he finally after a year or two got up to \$1.50 for those boys. These were husky high school boys.

The cash outlay on the farm in those days was usually for buying a piece of machinery occasionally; for seasonal labor, particularly harvest labor, both for hay harvest in particular and sometimes for corn harvest including somebody to husk corn during the winter, if you didn't have plenty of help at home. Most of the other cash outlay on the farm was for buying certain staple groceries such as coffee, sugar, tea and a few spices.



## Threshing

DSM: About two or three weeks after the wheat was harvested with the binder in the field and shocked the threshing started in the neighborhood. We had a threshing ring, following the same pattern pretty much year after year, with five or six neighbors helping each other out.

When I was about fifteen I started loading and hauling wheat to the machine from the field and this was the change from boyhood to manhood as far as farm boys were concerned. There was another lad of exactly my age who was a neighbor boy who started hauling wheat from the field at the same time.

We had a neighbor who could be very crusty when he was in the notion -- and he often was in the notion. He didn't think that boys of this age could be trusted so if the wheat was a bit damp he used to stand back of the wagons and watch us to be sure that we didn't pitch too many sheaves to clog up the machine. Usually he walked away after a while when he thought things were going all right -- and the minute he turned his back we loaded the machine to the point where it had to be cleaned out by hand and everybody could sit down and rest for a little while. This was the only person that we did this to. If he hadn't been so "persnickety" about it we wouldn't have done it to him but this was a challenge to kids of our age.

My first job at threshing was carrying water for the threshing hands, both for ourselves and for the neighbors, and I don't think I ever got over fifty cents a day from the neighbors, when they paid me for doing such a job. A little later I used to hang sacks on the grain spouts, and someone else took them off because they were too heavy for a young lad. Threshed grain was hauled into the graneries in two-bushel sacks.



HP: Made of what?

DSM: They were cotton sacks. The grain was stored until it was decided the price was right to sell. A two-bushel sack of wheat weighed 120 pounds, and a youngster became a full fledged threshing hand when he could shoulder a two-bushel sack of wheat by himself and walk off with it.

### Corn Harvest and Storage

DSM: Harvesting corn consisted of cutting by hand with a corn knife, or cutter and it was shocked in the field. As soon as we were old enough to "make a hand" we were allowed to stay out of school for a few days to help cut corn.

HP: I don't know what shocking means.

DSM: Shocking means standing the corn up around galluses. To make galluses you take four hills of corn and bring them together, (it is green of course) and you wrap the tops in such a way that they will hold and then you use that as a frame to set the corn up around. Usually in our day a shock was made up of twelve corn hills square. Twelve hills this way and twelve hills the other.

HP: Then there was a lot of air in the middle.

DSM: There was some air in the middle. We used to chase rabbits out of corn shocks when we hunted them in the wintertime.

Corn wasn't husked usually until after it was well matured and dried out. Consequently I did very little corn husking when I grew up because this was done during the period when we were in school. We occasionally did some husking on Saturday but



normally the huskers husked out the corn during the week and my brother and I spent most of Saturday hauling in what had been husked out during the school week.

HP: Was it husked out on the field?

DSM: They generally husked out in the field.

HP: Did they wear gloves?

DSM: No they didn't wear gloves; it was too bunglesome. Some of them used a husking peg that had a hook and a partial glove went over the hand and around the thumb. The hook was down at the base of the hand and they would hook into the husk, and pull it down. Most of them used a husking peg that you wore on the right hand that slipped over the fingers and had a hook much like a type of beer can opener and you just ripped it down and then husked it down.

HP: Was the corn left out in the field to dry or hauled to the barn?

DSM: We didn't have room in the barn in those days because the barn wasn't big enough to hold even enough hay. We stacked the hay out and left the corn in the field. A little later on about the time I was maturing and I was leaving the farm, they very often hauled it in as soon as it dried out in the shock and husked it by machine and shredded the fodder. The fodder was blown into the mows then if you had mow room, to be fed later to livestock out of the mow.

HP: Could the entire stock and leaves be used for fodder?

DSM: Cattle seldom ate the stalk but they did eat the leaves and we fed the fodder normally after they husked the corn. We bundled the fodder in bundles that could be handled easily and we hauled them in and stacked them outside the barn lot where we kept the livestock during the day and before we turned the livestock out we scattered several





bundles of fodder for them to feed on during the day. When we shredded the fodder of course they ate more of it because it was possible for them to eat the tougher part of the stock which had been shredded up into smaller bits.

HP: Did you have a machine for doing this?

DSM: We had a machine called a "corn shredder." It really was a corn husker because that was the important part of the job, but it husked and shredded both.

HP: Were there silos? When did silos come in?

DSM: I don't know exactly when silos came into use but we didn't have a silo until after I left the farm at age twenty-two but we got one I'm sure quite soon after that. They came into general use I would guess sometime between 1910 and 1920, and they were being widely recommended in my early days of extension work when I was at Purdue or in County Agent work in Indiana between 1916 and 1920.

HP: Many people do not understand exactly what silos are for, and if there is any reason for the construction in cylindrical shape.

DSM: Do you know how to make sauerkraut?

HP: Yes.

DSM: Well, it is the same idea as making sauerkraut. It is fermented corn and fodder. When they fill silos they cut the corn green after the ear has been pretty well matured and it is put through a silage cutter and cut up into small bits. It is run by power and blown up into the top of the silo and drops down and is packed into the silo just as you would pack cut cabbage into a kraut jar.

HP: And it is the entire corn plant?

DSM: It is the entire corn plant except the roots. They usually had a corn cutter that was drawn



by a team and bundled it like sheaves of wheat only it was taller of course and loaded it on wagons and hauled it into the silage cutter.

HP: Is there any advantage to the fermentation?

DSM: I don't think there was any advantage to the fermentation. It was simply a good way to store the whole plant and a mixture of corn and fodder, of course, and the fodder was green enough that once the cattle got used to it they ate the whole plant. They didn't eat the whole plant normally when you fed the dry plant.

Silos are still in use to some extent although they aren't as widely used as they were at one time. Just why I'm not sure. I think probably the main reason is that practically all the corn nowadays is allowed to stand in the field until it is ready to husk because it is husked by a power outfit which goes down the rows, husks the corn and carries it into wagons or trucks. The fodder is simply left in the field. But there are still a few silos that are being utilized.

The advent of more alfalfa and legume crops of that kind which helped provide green feed other than the type that we used to have which was largely timothy and clover, I think has made some difference. Of course, they use a large amount of mixed feeds now. So I assume that is partly the reason. I think probably there are more silos used by beef cattle producers now than dairy cattlemen although I have not followed the trend very closely in recent years. This is purely an inexperienced opinion.

### Potato Raising

DSM: My brother and I were allotted land for a potato patch of our own when we were old enough



to look after it ourselves so that we selected the seed, cut the seed, prepared the ground, furrowed out the rows, and dropped the seed pieces by hand and covered them in part by a one-horse shovel plow or with a hand hoe. We harvested potatoes in the early days by digging with a hand hoe or a four-tined manure fork. Potato culture was not easy. However, it did give us the opportunity to earn some cash which we were interested in having and I suppose we had a potato patch of our own for four or five years before I started to college.

We usually had anywhere from a fourth of an acre up to three fourths of an acre or a whole acre for potatoes. It depended on how old we were.

HP: What a lot of work!

DSM: It was a lot of work all right. My back aches yet every time I think about picking up potatoes or doing the kinds of jobs we did in those days.

Later on, of course, they perfected potato planters which brought the pieces around and dropped them about every so far apart. It was drawn by horses. They also perfected or reasonably perfected at least, a potato digger which was nothing more than a very wide moleboard plow with a shaker on the back which rode in under the potatoes, soil and all, and then the shaker would flip up and down and flip the soil out and leave the potatoes free so they could be picked up in baskets or crates.

HP: It was sort of a screen?

DSM: That's right. The bars were close enough together that the potatoes didn't fall through. But we weren't lucky enough to have that kind of an operation when we were having our own potato patch.

The first real money that I earned in this manner I spent for a Remington shot gun, which I still have. I don't suppose I ever bought anything that I got more pleasure out of as a kid then I did that.



HP: How old were you?

DSM: I was fourteen; the same year I started to high school. One of the good merchants in the town allowed a friend of mine, Nick Embrey, and me to go to Columbus with a order from him to the whole-sale house there to sell us a shotgun at wholesale. So Nick bought a Winchester and I bought a Remington.

### Butchering and Meat Preparation

DSM: One farm task that was always considered to be fun was the butchering of the year's meat supply during the winter. It was fun because we were allowed to stay out of school for the day, and there was always a gathering of certain neighbors and relatives which made it sort of a social occasion.

From the shooting and bleeding of the hogs, including the scraping, through the rendering of the lard and the making of the sausage, it was an exciting day for us. One of my uncles always helped us butcher because he was very expert. He was also a good shot. I felt that I was beginning to grow up when one morning he asked me if I wouldn't like to shoot the hogs which I did, and I thought I was a big guy. It was our own family meat supply. We usually butchered four or five hogs.

HP: That was a winter's supply?

DSM: That was a winter's supply; some of it usually lasted into the summer. Most of the meat was cured and smoked so it would last into the following summer if needed.

HP: Did you have your own smoke house?





DSM: We had our own smoke house. We smoked with hickory wood. We cured the meat -- the hams, the shoulders, the sides -- which were rubbed with a mixture of brown sugar, salt, pepper and saltpeter before it was smoked and was allowed to "cure" for a time. Then it was hung in the smoke house and smoked for several days. I don't remember for just how long. Then we bagged it in heavy paper bags and tied it up and hung it in the smoke house until it was used.

HP: Was the fire kept constantly during those days of smoking?

DSM: Yes.

HP: A very low fire?

DSM: A very low fire was maintained so that there was smoke instead of blaze. I suppose occasionally it would go out during the night and was rekindled again the next morning. I remember how it smelled and seeing the smoke coming out from under the rafters of the old smoke house when we had a good smoke going.

HP: Would you save hickory logs for this purpose?

DSM: No, we saved hickory pieces for smoking our meat. You don't use much wood when you smoke meat. Little pieces of hickory that aren't very big much like kindling wood only a little larger than kindling normally were used and we had plenty of hickory in those days. When a hickory tree was cut we would take the chips and small pieces that were left and use it for smoking meats.

HP: Was the smoke house a brick building?

DSM: No it wasn't a brick building. The smoke house on our farm was the oldest building on the place. It was a frame building, built of logs with black walnut siding and it was never painted until after I graduated from college and had left home.

Dad finally decided that it ought to be painted to make it match up with the other



buildings. We regretted it because we kind of liked it the way it was. But that siding had been on there, I suppose, for a hundred and fifty years or more and it was getting thinner each year because it was very dry of course and would flake off a bit. The old smoke house is still there. It will probably stay there unless it burns down.

HP: Then it is hundred and fifty years old at least; it must be a considerable fire hazard.

DSM: That's right, it probably is one hundred fifty years old. There isn't much of a fire hazard if you are careful.

HP: Was it a low fire?

DSM: Low fire, and we used one of these big iron kettles and set it in a barrel. The kettle was filled with sawdust to near the top. We were very careful to keep the fire in the middle and not to lay the hickory sticks so that any pieces would drop off when they burned down to the point where they might be heavier on the outside. So it never occurred to us that we might have a fire in the smoke house. I suppose people did.

HP: How many hams and shoulders of pork were there for a winter's supply?

DSM: Well, when we killed five hogs, which we very often did, there were ten hams and ten shoulders, which would be twenty, plus ten pieces of side meat which would be a total of thirty. Those were the pieces that were smoked after curing.

HP: What about bacon?

DSM: The side meat was used as bacon. We occasionally used the fattest part for cooking with beans on wash day but we also sliced it for fried bacon.

Spare ribs were eaten very soon after butchering because they were fresh and there was a general understanding among the neighbors that when we



butchered they would get some sausage and spare ribs and whatever it was that was available that we thought they might like of the fresh meats; and the same thing happened when they butchered.

We didn't butcher the same day as our neighbors so we had a lot of fresh meat at various times during the winter: fresh sausage, fresh spare ribs, and occasional tenderloin. The neighbors didn't give us the tenderloins, we saved out the tenderloins for use by ourselves.

HP: Was all sausage smoked?

DSM: We never smoked sausage. Some people do smoke sausage but we never did. What we did was to use quite a bit of it soon after butchering and the rest of it was fried down. This simply meant that it was partially cooked and put into a large five or ten gallon jar, twined around if it was cased sausage, that was the only kind we fried down, and then you poured hot lard over it until it was completely covered.

HP: That was a preservative?

DSM: That's right. If you would have looked into the top of that jar you would have thought, if you didn't know better, that it was only a jar of lard. The jar was a five or ten gallon crock usually white on the outside and dark on the inside. It could be done, of course, in a smaller crock or jar but usually when we fried down we did it in a big jar.

HP: The lard was used for shortening?

DSM: The lard was used for shortening. In the old days lard was about the only shortening that was used. We sold a lot of lard as we began to have cottagers nearby and others who were interested in buying butter, eggs, lard, etc.

We sold it in little wooden boats and weighed it out by the pound. I used to work for my uncle and aunt in a general store part of the time. We



used to sell it in the store. Nowadays lard is less often used, but it is still available. When hogs are slaughtered there is some lard, but most of the hogs nowadays are not the lard type that we had in the old days. Fat hogs were a good commodity and were in demand back in the early 1900's.

HP: Lean hogs have more meat...

DSM: That's right; bacon type hogs have a larger proportion of lean meat.

HP: How long would a jar of sausage and lard keep? Would it keep until spring?

DSM: Oh, yes. That was the whole idea. Usually we didn't start using the fried down sausage until toward spring and normally we didn't finish it off until early summer.

HP: But it wouldn't keep over for another year?

DSM: Well, I suppose it would. If we had kept it during hot weather the lard would have had a tendency to melt. You wouldn't have had as good protection for the sausage as you would during the winter season. We always kept it in a cool place.

### The Catfish Ceremony

DSM: One other little item that we, my brother and I, have always looked back upon that happened on butchering day was the frying of what we called the "catfish." My Uncle Zane Seymour, who helped us butcher, would come around about the middle of the afternoon after they had started rendering the lard and the fires were up and the lard was hot. He would whisper in our ears in a very secretive manner, wanting to know if we didn't think it was





about time for a "catfish". Of course we would jump up and down and say yes. We always slipped around slyly. He would take a knife and go cut a strip of tenderloin about the size of a small catfish for each of us and we would just drop it into the hot lard. It would sear immediately. We would leave it there a little while until it was cooked through and then we would fish it out with a long handled ladle.

By that time we had a hand full of salt and as soon as it was cool enough we ate the "catfish" and I have never tasted anything that tasted any better than that "catfish". It was something that we always looked forward to because it was our secret. Of course everybody knew what we were doing, but we thought it was a secret.

HP: I'm afraid I still haven't gotten the complete picture on the butchering: where it took place, whether the women took part in it -- the flavor of the whole thing.

DSM: Oh yes, the women, everybody worked at butchering time. The family who lived nearby who had only an acre or two of land themselves helped, the Roby family. Mr. and Mrs. Roby and one of the two grown sons always helped butcher. I have already mentioned my uncle Zane Seymour who always came down to help us butcher.

We were always allowed to stay home from school to help butcher. And then, of course, we usually in those days had a "hired girl" who was usually one of the Roby girls. Mother, of course, helped; everybody worked.

The first thing that happened in the morning was the starting of the fires and heating up water for dousing or scalding the hogs after they were killed so as to make the scraping of the hair easier. This was out-of-doors. The kettles were set between two logs on heavy iron rings with legs that were made by a blacksmith. The platform that was used to draw the hogs up on to after they were killed was the farm sled with boards put across it



lengthwise. Next to this were one or two barrels which were set so that they slanted toward the sled. As soon as the hogs were shot and bled by our neighbor Mr. Roby who was good at it, taking a butcher knife and cutting the jugular vein, they were dragged by a hook which was fitted into the back of the jaw, to pull them up onto the sled.

Then the boiling water was poured into the barrel or barrels and the hogs were then doused up and down in the barrel until tests around the legs showed whether the hair would come off easily, and when it did, they turned the hog around and doused the other end, then pulled them out. The hair was then scraped off either with knives or scrapers, that were made for the purpose.

HP: Was anything in the hot water?

DSM: Just hot water was used generally, but wood ashes were sometimes added.

HP: Was any use made of the hog bristles?

DSM: No. The bristles were lost as far as the farm was concerned. In the packing houses, of course, they were saved. They used to say they used everything but the squeal in the slaughter houses.

HP: A hog weighs about half a ton, doesn't it?

DSM: No, not that much. Normally the hogs we butchered would weigh anywhere from 200 to 250 or 300 pounds. The market size of hogs in those days was around 250 pounds normally. If it was fat or if you butchered an old hog which they occasionally did, we sometimes had one that would weigh up to 600-700 pounds. You usually sold the old hogs to somebody else to eat. They were a little tough.

HP: Were the women in on this phase of the butchering?

DSM: In the meantime the women were busy in what we called the wood house, where tables were set up with planks, boiling water ready to do a number of things including having the instruments cleaned up. As soon as



the hogs were scraped, they were hung on a scaffolding beside the hen house with one end next to the building and at the other end two posts were set up crisscross with a log chain around it to hold the scaffolding with a heavy post running across between the two. They were hung on what they called gambles, which were stuck through the leg right near the bend in the knee or the hock. They were held up by a couple of men and the gamble put over the top of the scaffold and slipped through the other leg so that they hung there to cool out.

HP: All five hogs in a row?

DSM: Yes.

HP: The scaffolding was put up just for this purpose, a temporary affair?

DSM: Yes, just for this purpose.

HP: It had to be very strong; my word, the preparation that went into butchering!

DSM: Yes, but of course it was a normal thing to prepare for butchering day; you didn't think much about it. It didn't take too much time.

As soon as the hogs were cooled out a bit they were cut up into various cuts: the hams, the shoulders, the sides, and the sausage meat were trimmed out. The major part of the lard came off the tops of the hams and the shoulders and around the loin and the top of the side meat, plus the leaf lard from inside the ribs.

HP: Let me be sure I understand. The hog has been killed and eviscerated and the bristle has been scraped off the skin and then the rest of him is still there; the whole hog.

DSM: The rest of him is still there. Usually after the carcass had been hung, one of the first things they did was to cut off the head. It was trimmed out





and the snout was taken out and the rest of it cooked to make mincemeat. Grandmother also liked souse so the ears were also cooked sometimes. That was one of the first things that were done after the hogs were hung. Then after they were cooled out they were moved back onto the sled, which had been washed down thoroughly, and that's where the cutting up, that is the major cutting up, was done. As soon as the cutting was well under way the women and the boys and anybody else who wasn't too busy began to cut lard. It was cut into little chunks about an inch or inch-and-a-half each way.

HP: Had the hogs been skinned, or was the skin part of the lard?

DSM: We usually didn't put the skin in with the lard, although it could be done that way. Sometimes the lard had the skin on it and that's one of the things that made cracklings. But there was also cracklings from lard that was skinned, too, because all you got out of it was the fat. The fibers that holds the fat together is still there. So the lard cutting was quite a job.

Cleaning of the entrails for sausage casings was started as soon as the hogs were cut up, and this was usually done by one or two of the ladies in the wood house away from the cold. They had a stove in there and it was possible to have enough heat to keep reasonably warm.

HP: I had forgotten that there weren't synthetic sausage casings.

DSM: No, there weren't synthetic casings. These sausage casings were prepared and ready. In addition to cutting up lard the parts that were to be used for sausage which was the scrappy parts of the meat that had mostly lean meat in it were cut up into pieces which went into the sausage grinder. Sausage grinding started as soon as there was anybody to turn the sausage grinder which was usually one of the jobs that we did as kids.





HP: Was it like a food chopper?

DSM: That's right. They were the same as food grinders nowadays, manually operated. The sausage was stuffed by the same machine that was used for pressing lard. When you pressed lard you ran it out hot into jars in liquid form from a spout and then when it was cooled it was just good white lard. When you got ready to stuff sausage the same machine was used only you took out the sort of strainer we had inside the machine for lard. We pressed the ground-up sausage and it came out through a spout into the entrail casings which had been attached to the spout.

HP: Is there anything inside the hog that is shaped like a sausage casing, or how did they get it into that cylindrical shape?

DSM: They simply used some of the intestines or entrails which were the proper size for this type of operation.

HP: Then it wasn't a matter of sewing it, or anything?

DSM: No, it was just a matter of scraping them and cleaning them thoroughly and then put in salt water in a little pan or jar until ready for use. They were clean and edible by that time.

HP: Was the sausage seasoned?

DSM: The sausage was mixed and seasoned as soon as it was ground.

HP: Did they put filler in with it?

DSM: No.

HP: No bread crumbs?

DSM: No, we didn't put in anything but meat, salt, pepper and a little sage usually. It depended on what people liked. We didn't put onion in it.

HP: Was your Mother in charge of this?



DSM: Well, yes and no. Mrs. Roby, the neighbor, was in charge of the cleaning of the sausage casings and she also usually officiated at the stuffing because she knew exactly what to do when once in a while one would be cut and she would see it coming up and it would start shooting out at the side and she would grab it and the sausage that didn't get into the casing would be put back through in the next run. She would cut the casing at that stage and start over.

HP: Did you eat sausage for breakfast?

DSM: Sausage was used for almost any meal, but breakfast was more normal. In those days on the farm you had meat of some kind almost every morning for breakfast especially during the winter. Cereal hadn't come into general use in our household as yet. Although we did have oatmeal and we had a lot of buckwheat cakes and pancakes and fried mush and that sort of thing during the winter. But we usually had sausage or bacon or even steak occasionally for breakfast.

HP: And eggs, I suppose.

DSM: Oh yes, eggs were in common use.

HP: Did you keep chickens?

DSM: Oh yes. Don't you remember I told you my first job was gathering eggs?

HP: All the butchering was done outside the house; nothing was brought into the house until the finished product was ready.

DSM: That's right. In our case this was true but I'm not sure that was true in every case. Our kitchen was small. Some places had large kitchens and I wouldn't be surprised if some of this processing of the sausage and so on wasn't done in the kitchen but not in our case. We used what we called the wood house for that.

HP: It's simply amazing how self-sustaining the farm was when you were young. Outside of coffee, sugar -- what else did you buy?



DSM: Well, there were certain seasonings. We could grow sage and occasionally did, but we usually bought a little sage and that sort of thing for seasoning. Coffee, tea and sugar were the major staples that we bought.

We tried to raise enough vegetables for use during the summer and for canning for use during the winter. Most vegetables in my early days were not so easy to can, because they hadn't developed the cold pack method yet and some of them spoiled. We always put up tomatoes, and of course fruits like peaches, apples and jellies and such. But it is true that some farms were almost completely self-sustaining.

We did buy our own brooms although I knew farmers and some of our relatives whom I mentioned earlier who lived in the north part of the county, grew their own broom corn and made their own brooms in an off season.

Getting back to butchering, I might add that we usually laid out planks on chunks of wood in our basement where the hams and the shoulders and the side meats were placed until they were rubbed with a combination of salt, sugar, saltpeter and pepper that I mentioned, before smoking. We used the basement because it was cooler down there than it was in some of the other areas.

HP: Was this before or after the smoking?

DSM: Before--right after the butchering. They started rubbing the meat with that combination of salt etc. within a few days after butchering, then we smoked it all at one time.

We had long stringers or beams that ran about two feet apart across the smoke house, the full length, with sharp hooks on them, so you could just hook the meat up there directly, or you could tie it with twine string and hook it up there. It got a little drippy sometimes if your fire got too hot.

There were two seasonal jobs which I enjoyed very much. Butchering in winter and threshing in



the summer. Part of the enjoyment came from the social contacts from these group activities and they were also feast days.

### Off-Season Work

DSM: One of the most onerous tasks which we indulged in in those days was the cutting and storing ice during the winter. We had our own ice house which we filled by cutting ice on Buckeye Lake and hauling it a mile or more to pack it in sawdust in the ice house.

The main hotel at Buckeye Lake have a very large ice house to provide their supply of ice during the summer months, and at age fourteen I worked with a crew for most of two weeks during the holiday season harvesting ice. It was hard, wet, cold work, but I wanted a new suit of long trousers for school wear, so I stayed with it and I was able to buy the suit for \$14.00.

Other off-season jobs on the farm were the various jobs that were carried on when the main crops were not being planted or harvested. In the summer after harvest was over there was always the job of mowing fence rows and open ditch banks with a scythe. When I got to be old enough I had this full job because I was the only one in the family that didn't poison from poison ivy. I had a week or ten days job of working all alone around the fence rows and up and down the open ditches.

HP: What is a fence row?

DSM: A fence row in those days was largely rows along the old rail fences where there was a lot of space taken up that could not be cultivated. They were sometimes called wormfences. Along the wire fences there were fence rows also, because you could only







get up about so close to a fence with a team when you were cultivating or plowing, so that there was always a strip on either side at least three feet wide.

HP: Is this waste space that has to be mowed?

DSM: That's right. It had to be mowed if you wanted to keep the weeds under control. They were usually mowed in August after harvest and threshing.

During my teenage period, in particular, we hauled a great deal of gravel during the off-season, because at that time we were beginning to use a lot of concrete. We made concrete drinking troughs for the animals; we put in concrete walks; we built a big wide concrete veranda, half way round the house.

HP: You did this yourself?

DSM: That's right. When we built the new barn we built a bank barn and it had a concrete wall on one side and both ends. The basement was concreted throughout. This was an off season job of concrete work normally. Not only of hauling the gravel but of mixing cement and aggregate by turning it with shovels and then taking it from the mixing board to the place where you wanted it in a wheelbarrow and dumping it and leveling it or packing it inside of forms.

Some of the other jobs, off-season jobs, had to do with clipping wheat stubble, with a mowing machine, in order to keep down the ragweed and other weeds that would grow up after the harvest, clipping pastures if there were too many weeds in the pasture.

On rainy days, of course, we very often oiled and mended harness, in the wintertime we put up ice, and in the fall we made cider, and in the late summer in addition to the other out-of-season chores, we usually hauled manure out of the barn lots that had accumulated from the feeding operations during the seasons when the cattle and the



horses were not out on pasture. There was always the job of building or rebuilding and repairing of fences.

### Community Road Repairing

DSM: We also usually had a period when we were hauling crushed stone for the road.

We prided ourselves on having one of the best roads in the county, before hard surface roads came in. The grading was done by the neighbors who used their teams and a township grader which was supplied. The township usually agreed to provide the crushed limestone. We didn't have enough gravel right close by. We and the neighbors would haul it and put it on the road; so we had a period of hauling road stone nearly every year until we got the road really built up to the place where it was quite a good road for that day before the automobile came in.

HP: Did you do road work only in front of your own land?

DSM: Oh no, a group of neighbors worked the whole strip of the road all the way from the national pike out beyond our place up to what later became Buckeye Lake Park which was better than two miles. There wasn't any question raised. We worked the whole strip. We would do a strip each year and the next year we would pick up right there and go on to the next strip. We didn't get it all done the same year.

HP: Who was in charge? Who told you what to do?

DSM: Usually the township trustee was responsible.

HP: Did he come out and actually oversee your work?



DSM: I don't remember of ever seeing a township trustee. They supplied the stone and the grader and somebody went and got it, and we did the work.

HP: Who gave the orders? Who told you what to do?

DSM: Well, we knew what to do. I don't know who was boss.

HP: Was this considered a form of government taxation? It was a very democratic thing to do.

DSM: I suppose some of the older men in the group like my Dad or John Neel, the old neighbor I mentioned awhile ago, maybe took over. I just don't know.

HP: What if one of the neighbors had said "I'm not going to work on the road this year."?

DSM: It never occurred to anybody to say that they couldn't help. Anybody who lived on the farm in that area, worked on the road. The people who usually served as day workers and whom I called the snake hunters didn't work on the road. They didn't have teams and they weren't a part of this neighborhood operation.

HP: It was a prestige thing then, wasn't it?

DSM: It was just accepted. It was a cooperative thing that was accepted, and I have never thought of the questions that you have just raised. Somebody I suppose raised the question whether it wasn't time to tell the Trustees to get some stone in and we started hauling stone.

We had what we called gravel beds for the wagons which simply meant that there were several flats about five or six inches wide that you fitted in with side boards and you unloaded the stone then by lifting the side boards and then slat by slat and dumping it right in the middle of the road or wherever you wanted to dump it.

HP: It really was a form of self government.

DSM: That's right.



HP: And apparently very democratically run.

DSM: Yes, it worked out very well.

HP: With a certain status to it--that the people who weren't property owners were not expected to participate.

DSM: Even if they owned property if they weren't farmers--there were a few people who had a acre or two but they didn't have teams, they didn't have equipment. The Robys were neighbors.

HP: You mentioned your neighbors the Robys. They had only an acre or so, you say?

DSM: Yes.

HP: Tell me about them.

DSM: Well, it happened that Mrs. Roby was a cousin of my Dad's. They had a family of about seven or eight youngsters. He was a Civil War veteran and a very good handyman and we looked to the Robys for all kinds of jobs throughout the year when we required extra help. They were harvest hands, they were butchering hands, they occasionally helped out in other jobs when we needed occasional extra help and in the meantime they worked their own acre or two; raised potatoes, raised vegetables and of course canned them and were pretty self sufficient.

The girls as they grew up worked out as hired girls. We had three different Roby girls work for us while I was a youngster. As one of them got married another one came on and worked for us.

HP: They obviously had a somewhat subordinate position in the community and I wonder why? Was it limited intelligence or was it physical strength? As a Civil War veteran he must have been pretty well advanced in age.

DSM: No, it wasn't physical strength. They were as strong as most men.





HP: Were they the kind of people who were successful?

DSM: Well, the Robys were accepted like anybody else in the community in local affairs such as school socials and that sort of thing if they wanted to participate. But they were not thought of in terms of leadership.

The Roby kids and we grew up together.

HP: Did you date the Roby girls?

DSM: No, I never dated them and most of them were older. There were only two who were our age. We used to go hunting every time we could get off during the winter with a Roby boy that was my brother's age, a little older than I. Most of the family was older and some of them were already married and had left home by the time I came along.

But they were sort of a self sufficient family. They had one horse, which was enough to do their plowing with a small plow and their cultivating on the small acreage that they had. If they needed a team they occasionally borrowed a team from us.

HP: I'm just trying to guess the sociological grouping in your community. They seemed to occupy a subordinate position and I wonder why?

DSM: Well, I don't think they were considered subordinate in most senses, Helen. It seemed that they participated only as hired hands in such things as threshing, harvesting, butchering and so on because they didn't trade work. They couldn't reciprocate.

The same thing is true about hauling stone on the road because they were not equipped. Come to think of it I think they used to help do some leveling with shovels once the stone was dumped.

HP: A voluntary or paid contribution?

DSM: A paid contribution. I don't think most of the people of that type did contribute to road work.



People up around the lake I don't think did. It is a little hard to explain what the difference was because they were accepted as playmates, they were accepted if they wanted to be in the social activities, but for the most part they usually didn't go to church which was one of the social activities.

HP: Could it have been a lack of proper clothes that kept them from church?

DSM: I don't think so. As a matter of fact I think as the girls and men grew older they did occasionally go to church but I don't think the older folks went to church much. Mrs. Roby went occasionally. It wasn't that they were complete heathens in the sense that we thought of heathens.

HP: Did they ever come over to meals at your house? Special dinner or anything like that?

DSM: No. We always went to Grandmother Seymour's for Christmas when I was young. Either to Grandmother's or one of the aunts. Later on, of course, we had it at our house with our own family, our immediate family.

HP: There just wasn't much of a social relationship with the Robys.

DSM: Well, not in that sense, no. We thought very highly of the Roby girls who had worked for us and one of them was still living until recently. She was in the early eighties. She took care of my Mother after her own husband died several years ago and Mother got to the place where she needed somebody to help her out.

She took care of Mothers household until she broke a hip. I never went back home that I didn't go to see her and chitchat with her because we thought of her as practically a member of the family; she helped raise us.

HP: You have no idea what they were paid as hired girls?



DSM: No, they weren't paid much I assure you.

HP: Perhaps something like \$3.00 a week.

DSM: I think that's probably right, and at that time I don't think they got more than \$3.00 or \$4.00 or \$5.00 a week at the outside. They got their board and their room of course. Later on when she came to take care of Mother in recent years she got \$35.00 a week and her board and room, so the times have changed pretty drastically.

HP: Your family was certainly one of the leading families in the community.

DSM: Yes. This was always hard for me to believe, Helen. I remember some of the kids from what we called the snake hunter group used to tell me how rich we were and I knew that we were in debt and had been in debt for years. We were paying off some money that had been borrowed during Grandmother Myer's day after Grandfather died. She wasn't too good a manager. We always had patches on our pants but that didn't seem to make any difference.

As far as these kids were concerned we lived in the big house. They thought that we had lots of money, I presume, compared with them, but I didn't think we had any money because I wasn't getting any of it unless I raised a patch of potatoes. This I'm sure, as I look back, was the general feeling of kids of that category: that we were some of the elite, the outstanding well-to-do citizens. We weren't too well-to-do but nevertheless we did own 135 acres of land and we had buildings to go with them.

Finally we had a new barn, and other improvements. Later on as we began to rent some of the land for cottage lots things began to get better but we never made a lot of money farming so we never had much cash.

HP: There were so many other things besides cash.



DSM: Oh sure. If there hadn't been more than cash it would have been terrible. There was plenty of food and many homely pleasures.





## CHAPTER III

## PLEASURE AND RECREATION

DSM: Farm boys had to have some pleasure and recreation as well as hard work. Some of the things that we got pleasure from was the owning and rearing of pets. I remember that we had one or two pet lambs which grew into sizable sheep which were ultimately sold and there were tears when they went off to the market.

At one stage when I was a youngster, we had a pet gosling. One day when the family was away my brother and I decided to have a parade--he led the lamb and I led the gosling. I put a string around his neck and by the time they came home the gosling was beyond recall. I had choked him to death.

We occasionally had a pet pig, a runt pig, that needed a little extra attention. I remember one that our hired man called "Toby" for some reason or other. I don't know where he got the idea. This pig was smart enough so that every time the cows were milked and the milk was brought in, he used to come in to the yard through a little hole in the bottom of the gate where one picket had been broken off where he could just get through. We would put out a pan of milk for him and he would drink so much that he couldn't get back out between the pickets so he would go off and lie down by a little cherry tree nearby until he had shrunk back to the size where he could get back through the hole. He knew enough to know that he couldn't do it and he learned enough to know all he had to do was wait and he would shrink back to normal size.

At Easter time or previous to Easter time it was a great game to hide eggs, and to brag about how many dozen you had hidden. I'm sure that the



eggs were never very good quality by the time they were retrieved. Very often it was cold enough that if we hadn't hidden them in a warm place they would freeze.

HP: They were colored eggs?

DSM: No, these were eggs that we had gathered. I should say that we stole from the family and hid them in boxes. Everybody expected it. We used boxes or anything that you could find. We would tuck them away in the hay mow or any good hiding place.

HP: Were they boiled?

DSM: No. They were fresh eggs at the time they were hidden and then they were brought in on Easter morning to count out to see who had hidden the most eggs. Kids around the whole neighborhood used to brag about how many they had hidden. Of course it was a game to get away with it because Mother and Dad weren't too happy to have their eggs hidden.

Then we colored some eggs but not very many. It was great business to brag about how many eggs you ate on Easter morning. I don't remember what my record is but I did pretty well.

HP: You mean cooked for breakfast?

DSM: Cooked for breakfast, that's right.

HP: Not hard boiled.

DSM: If you liked them hard boiled they could be hard boiled, but usually they were soft boiled or fried. Any way that you liked them.

HP: How many eggs would you eat? Half dozen or something like that?

DSM: I probably ate six or eight. Farm kids could get away with six or eight eggs without too much trouble.



Memories of Visits to Grandmother Seymour

DSM: Memories that stand out are the holiday visits to my Grandmother Seymour's. Usually we went there on Thanksgiving and Christmas and my brother and I usually went to stay with them for two weeks during the summer when we were younger, when we weren't yet making a full hand at home.

HP: Tell me about the Seymour household. Where it was and exactly what it was like and so on.

DSM: Well. The Seymour household was five miles away on one route and on another route it was seven miles from our place. It was up a long lane off the Lancaster road and near the National Pike (Route 40). The road ran from Luray, about two miles from Hebron. Hebron, of course, is quite a metropolis compared to Luray. Hebron has 800 and I think Luray had about 50.

HP: Then or now?

DSM: Still. They haven't changed much.

They, the Seymours, had settled on this land back in the 1850's about the time they were married. First they went to Indiana and settled in Tippecanoe County, Indiana, near Lafayette for a short time and then came back to Ohio and built a log house.

The old log house was still standing when I used to go up there as a kid. The roof had partly fallen in. They kept some livestock back there and the logs were still good.

The older kids were born in the log house but I think maybe they had built the other one before my Mother came along.

The house wasn't too big. They had what they called a summer kitchen that was attached to the house by a porch. I can smell it yet, it smelled good. It always smelled good.





HP: What was a summer kitchen?

DSM: In the wintertime they set their cook stove up in the same room that they used for a dining room the year around. They cooked in there and they served in there. But during the summer they cooked in the summer kitchen where they had a big stove. They had all the kitchen equipment that they needed there and the food was carried through the porch into the dining room to be served.

HP: It was to keep the heat out of the house.

DSM: I suppose. I don't know why.

HP: Were they both coal ranges or wood?

DSM: They were wood ranges, in those days.

HP: They had stoves in both places.

DSM: Oh yes, or they could very easily move it, you know. In the summer time they moved the stove out of the dining room to make more room if nothing else. They may have moved it back and forth. I'm not sure about that. They had a good sized range I remember in the summer kitchen which wasn't too easy to move and I think maybe they simply stored the other one temporarily.

We had great times there at Grandmother Seymour's. We always had presents at Christmas time. They were not very costly presents. The whole family gathered in for the picking of the Christmas tree. My Grandmother had a family of seven at that stage. Incidentally all of the seven with one exception lived to be 82 years old or older. The one that lived to be the oldest was an aunt of mine who lived with my Mother for a number of years before she died at age 102.

HP: How old was your Mother when she died?

DSM: My Mother died at 94. She would have been 95 in two more months. My Aunt Alice, who was one of my favorite people, died at the age of 52 with cancer





of the lung. All the rest lived to more than eighty-two years of age.

Thanksgiving was quite a day but it didn't have presents, of course, as you had at Christmas.

The Seymours were farmers just the same as the Myer family was and I assume had about the same standing in the community. Some of the Seymours were quite active Methodists as my Dad and my Mother were. My Aunt Mate, for example, who lived to the ripe old age of 102, always sang in the choir when I was a kid. She had a good alto voice.

HP: What is the name Mate a nickname for?

DSM: Mary.

### A Country Quartet

DSM: My Uncle George was a good tenor. There was a quartet in the community of which he was a member as a young man. They sang all the popular songs of the day. The quartet type of songs such as "Where Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?", and also some songs that were much more serious than that. They always threw in one of this kind because people just loved it--"With his tail cut short and his hair cut long" and so on.

It used to be fun to watch that quartet. A chap by the name of Mac Brown was the base, Alf Parish was second tenor, Sam Rosebraugh was baritone. Sam Rosebraugh was always losing the place. You could always see them pointing a finger when they realized that Sam was lost. One time I've forgotten what they were singing but Sam sang "Where, Oh where is the place" and one of them sang "I'll be damned if I know."



HP: This was in front of a crowd?

DSM: That's right. Of course it was a group of people that knew what they were doing. They sang at funerals, they sang at all kinds of affairs. Three of them were farmers and Sam Rosbaugh was a harness maker in Hebron. They started singing when they were kids. Uncle George was a member, the tenor. He is one of the Seymours that lived to be 92.

As I said earlier, my brother and I used to go up there for two weeks every summer which we thoroughly enjoyed.

We helped out with the chores and if there was anything to do, such as hauling gravel and that sort of thing, we went along and helped to load gravel in the off season. We helped with the harvest. I have a finger that is badly mangled because I tried to help a horse pull up some hay and got my finger into the pulley and the rope peeled it off. My uncle and aunt took me to the doctor at Hebron four miles away by horse and buggy.

We also did some shooting, and hunting. Shooting the blackbirds to keep them out of the corn field if it was that time of the year was fun for us.

I remember quite distinctly one of my great frustrations. After I had been at Grandmother's about a week one summer we went to church on Sunday night, which was not unusual. My Aunt Mate drove us and my brother and I went along. Of course, my parents were there. As we came out of the church my Mother put her arm around my shoulders as we walked out to the buggy and she said "We're going to thresh this week, don't you want to come home with us?" She didn't realize that this was a rather cruel thing to do. I didn't want to go home but I didn't want to miss threshing and I wept tears that went clear to my toes. I suppose I wept the most of the way back to Grandmother's but I decided to stay that extra week. It was the kind of decisions kids have to



make once in a while that are kind of tough. I think this indicated how well I liked my Grandmother. She was a great person.

Grandfather Seymour had died in 1890, the year before I was born, so Grandmother had been a widow for a number of years.

Grandmother Seymour continued to run the farm with the help of her boys, and she had three at home at that time. They did the heavy farm work. She was a good farm hand herself. She did the milking usually and she did a lot of other chores. When the old cat had kittens and she had too many around she was the one who took the kittens in the coal bucket to the creek.

HP: What did she look like, Dillon?

DSM: She wasn't a very big woman. She was spare, wiry and gray hair almost ever since I could remember. White hair, of course, by the time she passed away at age 85. She had a wonderful smile.

HP: Was she a good cook?

DSM: Oh, wonderful. Just superb. I suppose it was one reason why we liked to go up there because I told Mother, she did things better than she did. I said I liked Grandmother's cookies better than Mother's and Mother used to get so mad because she said "I make them exactly like she does." She did I'm sure, but there was something about the aura of Grandmother's kitchen and cookies that made me like them better.

### Marooned by a Storm

DSM: One other incident that I'm reminded of is a scary one. During the summer, as I have mentioned,





my brother and I usually spent two weeks at our Grandmother's. My Aunt Mate who was still a bachelor lady usually looked after us and if she went any place she took us with her. One day we went to Newark to do some shopping which was a distance of eleven or twelve miles.

We got near home after dark and a big storm had come up. The storm had blown a large tree down across the road which was just across the fields from my Grandmother's house but this was probably half a mile or more away.

We were in a dilemma because my brother and I were afraid to go for help and Aunt Mate didn't dare leave us with a skittish horse to go for help so all she could do was to wait and yell for help.

During this wait she called for her brothers. We saw them come out to the barn with a lantern, hitch up a horse to a cart, and drive out the lane which was not too far from where we were and they went in the other direction to Millersport, a town probably three and a half miles away. I don't know whether they went to the barbershop or did some shopping. It was only when they came back from Millersport that they finally heard my aunt call and two of my uncles came down and helped to roll the tree off the road so we could pass.

HP: How long were you marooned there?

DSM: I think we must have been marooned there about three and a half hours.

HP: Did you have anything to eat?

DSM: Well, I don't remember about that. I suppose we had had something to eat. We probably had some candy and that sort of thing with us but I don't remember about it. We were too scared to remember very much.

HP: Was it raining?





DSM: No it wasn't raining at that time. It was windy and it had rained but at that time it wasn't raining but of course, we had a little phaeton with side curtains on it.

Going back to Christmas time for a moment, some of the simple pleasures were having popcorn balls, strings of popcorn which were used to decorate the tree in those days and you could eat it off by having one kid at one end and another at the other end and see who got to the middle first. All such simple pleasures as that. If you got an orange in the bottom of your stocking on Christmas morning you really had something that you treasured. Nowadays, of course, kids don't realize that oranges were scarce back there.

HP: I suppose they would have to go to town and buy oranges at Christmas time.

DSM: Oh yes, they bought oranges. The storekeeper got them in at Christmas time. It was about the only time they ever had them. Once in a while they got a bunch of bananas out of season but not very often. But oranges were something special at Christmas.

HP: What were other Christmas gifts? Something knitted?

DSM: Occasionally you got something knitted but a pair of skates was really something and books that kids could read. Knitted mittens were very common but I don't remember that we had home knitted socks because Mother didn't do that kind of knitting and Grandmother didn't either. She didn't have time.

Candies and an orange beside one major present was about what we had at home. Then we always had some small gifts at Grandmother's and gifts from the aunts. Once in a while we would get something as big as a sled.

HP: They lived close enough that you could go up just for the day on Christmas?



- DSM: That's right. We would go up to Grandmother Seymour's as soon as the chores were done in the morning and come back in time to do the chores in the evening. Which meant that we usually got there about 10:00 or 10:30 and left by 4:00 or 4:30.
- HP: The chores must have been the nagging thing about life on a farm. That you couldn't leave the animals whether you felt like it or not.
- DSM: You're telling me. The chores that I had to do were not only feeding but also the milking. As I got old enough to have dates and to be away on Sundays I always had to get home and help milk on Sunday evening and my brother didn't need to because he didn't milk. It used to irk me no end. But we did it. We milked every morning and milked every evening.

#### Plans To Become A Farmer

- HP: That well may have been a factor in your not wanting to be a farmer.
- DSM: No. In spite of monotonous chores I wanted to be a farmer. As a matter of fact I had planned to be a farmer. I had bought a farm just before the war broke out in 1917 and I had planned to farm but by the time I got ready to farm I wasn't married and I didn't think anybody who doesn't have a wife should live on a farm. When I got married I didn't marry a farmer's wife.
- HP: You pretty nearly have to be in a farm family to be able to cope with all the problems.
- DSM: Well, I kept the farm that I had bought in 1917 until 1948 because I was interested in it. As long as we lived in Columbus, Ohio, before we moved to Washington, I was down there almost every



weekend and occasionally on holidays. I would help out with the wheat harvest or occasionally with work of other kind. I liked to get my hand in again.

HP: You had a tenant farmer?

DSM: Yes, my uncle who used to help us butcher, had the farm for a number of years until he got older and then he took over the home farm of his in-laws and I had to get other tenants.

#### More About Fun During The Days On The Farm

DSM: Other fun that we had on the farm included horseback riding, horse racing as we got old enough to have a horse and rig of our own, youth parties which we usually enjoyed during the winter with an occasional one during the summer, including such things as taffy pulls, and parties with the kind of kid games that were played in those days including post office, etc.,

Games at school such as prisoner's base, black man, sock ball and others, of course, were always fun. Hide-and-go-seek was a very common game and I assume that it still is. School socials, spelling bees, were always a part of the family fun.

I took great pleasure in taking on new tasks considered to be a man's work. I mentioned already at the time of butchering I felt that I was beginning to grow up when my uncle suggested that I shoot the hogs.

I remember the first time that my Dad allowed me to plow for any length of time. I took over about the middle of the morning because we were trimming raspberries which I didn't like to do.





The hired man was doing the plowing so he let me go out and plow in his place. I finished out the day and I was so tired by evening that they were up with me half the night because my legs ached so badly that I couldn't sleep. I was just a kid of course.

I loved to plow with a walking plow. There was something about watching the soil turn and the smell of the soil and the movement of the team. We had a good team. I just thoroughly enjoyed it. I have never gotten over it and I would still like to do it even though I nearly killed myself the first time around.

Taking a team at threshing time, which I mentioned, for the first time was fun.

There was hunting in the wintertime. We hunted without guns until we were old enough to have a gun. We usually had a dog. If we didn't have one of our own we had a neighbor's dog and we would chase a rabbit into a corn shock or into a culvert or ditch where we would poke him out. We got a rabbit about every other time we went out hunting.

HP: The dog would catch it?

DSM: The dog would sometimes catch him but very seldom. We usually got them holed up some place where we could catch them without the dog's help. He helped to tree them usually.

In the summertime we did a great deal of fishing. We used to keep the family in fish for breakfast. Very often we went to the lake, now called Buckeye Lake. It used to be called the Licking Reservoir. We would go over there in those days in an hour's time you could catch forty or fifty nice blue gills or maybe a few perch mixed in or an occasional catfish. We would bring them home and clean them and we would have them for breakfast the next morning. There was nothing like a good fresh fish.





These were in general the kinds of things we did. Of course in the wintertime we had skating and coasting in addition to the rabbit hunting. There were probably others that I have overlooked.

### The Coming Of The Interurban And Related Items

DSM: There were certain new developments during the time when I was growing up that stand out in my memory. About the time I was twelve years of age, I presume 1902 or 1903, the Columbus, Newark and Zanesville interurban traction line was completed with a spur from Hebron to Buckeye Lake. It became known as Buckeye Lake after the traction company bought up land and established Buckeye Lake Park. This brought major changes and new experiences in my young life.

HP: I would like to hear what part that development played in your whole family life and in yours particularly.

DSM: Well, transportation, of course, into town, into the county seat and even into Columbus became very much easier. In order to get into Columbus before the traction line came in we had to take the T and OC Railroad and change at a place called Thurston and it took it seemed to me hours to get there.

HP: Toledo and Ohio Central?

DSM: Toledo and Ohio Central ran through our town of Hebron.

HP: How long did it take to get from home to Columbus?

DSM: I don't remember exactly. I never did it over two or three times. I went to Columbus first when I was five years old. My Mother went to the hospital to have a nonmalignant tumor removed and my aunt



took us up just before Christmas. It seemed to me the wait at Thurston was interminable. I suppose it took not over an hour and a half or two hours but it seemed an awfully long time. Then I remember we went on an excursion or two, a Sunday School excursion to Columbus by train.

HP: How would you get to the train?

DSM: Well, we took the train from Hebron which was three and a half miles from home.

HP: You took a horse and buggy?

DSM: We took a horse and buggy and put it in a livery stable until we got back if we went for a day, or somebody took you in and then went home.

HP: I never realized that the livery stable was sort of a boarding place.

DSM: Oh sure.

HP: The horses didn't necessarily belong to the livery stable.

DSM: When we went to Newark we always put our horses up in the livery stable during the day while we were there, and they fed them at noon. We usually took our own corn but they fed them hay. We used to have what they called a ten cent barn. We could stand our horse and rig in there all day for a dime if we brought our own feed. They would charge you extra if they supplied the feed.

HP: Was this under cover?

DSM: Oh yes.

HP: Did you unhitch the vehicle?

DSM: Yes. We usually unhitched them although in this particular one you could stand them in and tie them up without unhitching the rig. But in most cases you did unhitch them. What the livery stable did, of course, was lease horses and carriages or buggies which they owned but they



also took care of other peoples horses when they came into town.

To go back to the interurban line. This gave us the opportunity and the freedom which we did not have previously to travel with ease. Newark, our county seat, was about, depending on which way you went, nine or twelve miles from our home. During my high school days we went to the theatre many many times with our dates which we couldn't possibly have done if we had been dependent upon a horse and buggy.

HP: You mean that you would drive into Hebron.

DSM: Yes or we could go in on the interurban on the spur to Buckeye Lake which was just across the field from us. In the wintertime though if we did that we walked home from Hebron at night. If you went early enough you could catch a car in because it ran until six o'clock. But we did this very often. We would go in on the car or walk in and then we would walk home. Two and a half to three miles and we could do that in half an hour if we stepped right along on the railroad track.

We went to high school by taking the interurban, which ran to Hebron. It had a one-man motorman and conductor. He was awfully good to us. He would toot the whistle the minute he was ready to leave the park which was a little farther away than it was from our house down to the railroad. We would start on the run and he would run slowly until he got down to the Neal's crossing and we would just about make it there all out of breath. We would get on and he would grin and say "Well, I almost beat you this morning."

HP: How long would it take you to get there?

DSM: Oh just a whip-stitch, three or four minutes. It was only about a quarter of a mile.

HP: What was the fare, do you remember?





DSM: It was a nickel to begin with; maybe it went up to a dime later. We went home from high school the same way.

I used to go to baseball games and the Grand Circuit Harness Races occasionally by interurban. As I got old enough I would sneak away from home and let on that I had gone some place else if I went to a Sunday baseball game because my Dad did not favor Sunday baseball games.

HP: This interurban really made an enormous change, didn't it?

DSM: It opened up a whole new era. The opening of the summer resort which the interurban company did at Buckeye Lake changed our whole economy. We started selling milk, vegetables and produce to the hotels and to the cottagers who began to build cottages, or to rent cottages during the summer.

From the time I was about twelve or thirteen up till the time I went to college at age eighteen my Father and I delivered milk morning and evening by hand. We measured it out in a quart or a pint measure and poured it out into somebody's pan. Of course the hotels would take maybe two to five gallons depending on the crowd expected. On a big day five or ten gallons.

HP: Did the interurban company build the hotels?

DSM: The railway company built one hotel and then there were others that were built privately near by.

HP: Summer hotels?

DSM: Yes. They were summer.

People started coming to the house to buy produce. There got to be so many of them that we decided to deliver. That's the way it all got started.

When I got back from delivering milk in the morning I would help to harvest whatever vegetables





that were ready and I would deliver such things as butter and eggs, sweet corn, green beans, apples and anything else that we had for sale.

HP: Who would set the price? Your Mother?

DSM: My Dad, I think, usually set the price.

HP: What did you use? Did you have a horse and carriage?

DSM: We made over an old buggy into a spring wagon that would haul quite a load of sweet corn for example. This was an experience, I suppose, that had a good deal to do with my learning to deal with people. You dealt with all kinds of people under these circumstances. Some people would like to fight with you.

I remember one old lady who was a good customer. She and I were good friends. But she came out one day and said "My milk soured." She started to give me the devil about it, and I had just poured a pint of milk into her pan. She only took a pint of milk that morning. So I just picked it up and poured it back into my can and said "I'm sorry you don't like our milk" and started on. You should have heard her. She wanted milk so she called me back. She never bawled me out again. Never.

HP: You had milked it that morning.

DSM: Oh sure. It was fresh milk but we didn't cool it well enough and it is a wonder that it didn't sour much more often than it did because we didn't handle it as it ought to have been handled, but usually it was fresh enough and our cans were clean of course and if they took care of it properly they could keep it from morning to night at least or from morning until the next morning and they did not order more than they thought they were going to need.

HP: This added a cash income during the summer.

DSM: Oh absolutely. I used to carry a pocket full of change and of course when I got bills I would turn



them in. But in the meantime I was allowed to spend anything that I thought I needed out of that cash. If I needed a bottle of pop I bought a bottle of pop which was amazing because we had been pretty frugal throughout the years but it taught me a bit about how to handle money.

HP: Did you extend any credit or was it cash basis?

DSM: We sold for cash. We sold tickets for milk if someone wanted to buy tickets to make it easier.

HP: They paid in advance.

DSM: That's right. In this process of carrying a pocket full of change and selling produce for cash I learned much about human nature and I found some of it good and some of it bad.

HP: Were you shy? Was this an ordeal for you or did you enjoy it?

DSM: No. I think I enjoyed it. I was a shy farm kid and of course under certain conditions I was still shy but I had gotten pretty well accustomed to the routine and I knew most of the customers. Of course, there were strange people who came into the cottages for a week or two or three but I got so it didn't bother me.

HP: Did they add to your sophistication? Some were probably rather sophisticated people compared to the ones you had known.

DSM: I don't think there was too much difference.

HP: There wasn't gambling or that sort of thing?

DSM: There was some of it but I didn't see much of that.



### An Expansion Of Business

- DSM: The demand increased our dairy herd. We had to do more milking, increase our vegetable production, and when we ran out of produce we bought from four or five neighbors if we had to have more. I used to go and pick up eggs and butter, milk even under certain conditions, if we had a big demand on holidays and big days.
- HP: Would you call neighbors and ask if they had extra milk or how would you do that?
- DSM: I usually went to these neighbors without calling because it was easier to go and check. We knew we could get produce in most cases because they would save it for us and during mid-summer we were usually able to handle most of the surplus that they had: such things as eggs, butter and current produce then in season.



## CHAPTER IV

## GROWING UP DURING THE TEEN YEARS AND MY FIRST JOB

DSM: During the summers between ages around fifteen or sixteen to twenty-two at the time I graduated from college my brother and I would work all day on the farm; after work we would get rid of the day's grime in the old cedar wash tub. Then garbed in clean clothes we would go to the park almost every night to dance or date or maybe just to watch other people. This usually meant late hours for farm boys and as a result it was not easy to crawl out of bed in the early morning or to start again after a thirty minute noonday siesta. Our Father many times pointed out that most of the people who frequented the park were on vacation, long or short, did not have to work the next day, so we should not try to do what they did because it was hard work all summer for us. But we persisted in spite of his admonitions and tired bodies. As I look back we put up with many aches and pains just so we could say we had been to the park every night.

I learned to dance on a public dance floor with the very much appreciated help of the older girls in our crowd. Roller skating was free to us because the operators of the skating rink kept a horse at our place. We also had free rides on the roller coaster because two of the head operators boarded with us for a time during the summer.

There was a strange interlude or two that may prove interesting. Our church decided one summer to sponsor a couple of so-called fresh air kids which meant that they were willing to arrange with their members to take a couple of kids from the city for two weeks where they could get out into the country and get the fresh air that they felt that they needed.





About the time I was ten or eleven and my brother was thirteen or fourteen such a project was sponsored and my parents decided to take on two boys. It happened they were brothers and they were almost the same age as my brother and myself. Their names were Willie and Harry Graham from Columbus, Ohio. During the first few days of their stay my brother and I sat at their feet enthralled by stories of city life including the routines of their uncle's livery stable.

When the city life stories began to be less interesting it occurred to us that maybe there were some exciting things that we could show them. It was fortunate that no one got hurt or killed for one of the first things that we did was to bridle up old "Queen" and "Gyp", a pair of bay carriage horses, and took them out into the pasture field and boosted the boys on to them without saddle, just bareback, and when we got them settled on their backs we stood back with a hitch strap each of us and gave the horses a crack across the back end that started them down through the field as hard as they could run. It happened that the boys did survive. I think at least one of them fell off before they slowed down but nobody got stepped on.

We then remembered that there were two or three bumblebee nests in the recently harvested meadow so we maneuvered them so that they walked through them while we were on the flanks and of course they got stung and they had to do the fighting. These experiences and others taught a couple of city boys that all the excitement did not lie in the cities.

On Sundays we went to Sunday School and Church regularly. I went through all the paces from the Primary Sunday School Class to the passing of the collection baskets during the time I was a teenager. My Father was a dedicated Methodist layman and a pillar in the church but he didn't have us baptised and entered into the membership of the church as babies because he felt it should be our own choice. This situation lead to a continuing challenge to our several successive ministers to get Johnny Myer's boys into membership and consequently we were preached



to and at so often that we became bored and obstinate. As a result during my years on the farm I did not join the church.

I neglected to mention one other instance in relation to the Boxwell or Patterson examination which I mentioned earlier. They had a commencement for the people who had passed that examination. I had a "piece" to speak. I think the title was "Should The Farmers Go On A Strike." When I got up to say my piece the first line eluded me completely and I stood there before the audience embarrassed. It seemed to me it was five minutes--it probably was not over half a minute--but long enough that I could see my uncles and others looking down their noses and feeling sorry for me. It was an experience that I shall never forget. The line finally came to me and I took off. Once I got started I went through it in a hurry.

### High School

DSM: The high school which we attended was at Hebron, Ohio, and it was a small high school. My brother had not gone to high school previously because they had not had a good high school up to this time so we both started at the same time. He lasted only one year because he couldn't stand the pressure and the feeling of wounded pride that he had of having to go to school with his younger brother who was almost three years younger than he was. So he quit at the end of his freshman year and I continued.

Six boys and six girls graduated in my graduation class which indicates something of the size of the institution. We went to high school on the inter-urban which fortunately ran all through the winter during the daytime.



These were the days of horse and buggy courting, hay wagon parties, kid parties, birthday surprise parties, etc. These were the things that made up most of the social life other than skating and sledging in the wintertime. The school was not big enough for a football team. It was hardly big enough for a baseball team but we had one, but we usually had to run in a ringer or two who was not in school anymore in order to make out a team of nine players.

We had a debating team which was pretty good. One instance that I remember quite distinctly was when we went to Kirkersville, which was six miles up the pike toward Columbus, to debate the Kirkersville High School one night and afterward when we came out to get on the interurban we were egged by a bunch of hoodlums and most of us went home with eggs all over our overcoats.

HP: Do you remember what things you debated, what subjects?

DSM: I don't remember what subjects we debated. I do remember that I was the cheerleader in those days and about the only place you did any cheerleading was at the debates. How I happened to be selected I don't know. Anyhow, I probably could still give some of the old high school cheers.

### My Early Courting Days

DSM: I had two girls during this period. The first one was about half as tall as I now am. A little bit of a thing and fortunately she didn't think I was quite her style so I started going with another girl. Ruth Pence was her name. I went with her all the rest of high school and all the way through college.

We decided to call it quits about the time I was in my senior year when I decided to go to Kentucky to





teach I stopped by her house and got all of the fraternity pins and the sort of jewelry that she didn't need anymore.

I suppose going steady was a good thing for me because it sort of kept me running straight if I had been loose I don't know what I would have done.

During this time Ruth's father for some reason or other got mad and upset. I don't think he knew quite why but in order to be mean which he was at times, he decided that I shouldn't come to the house but that didn't stop us. I used to drive up in front of the house with my horse and buggy and Ruth would step out and we would go riding across the countryside. Finally he wanted to give a party for her on one of her birthdays, but she said no, she didn't want a party, because I couldn't come. So he broke over and let me come after which I went to the house again regularly.

He was one of those people. He just got twisted up one day and this was the ornriest thing he could think of, I guess. She was an only daughter and I think he thought I was getting too serious. I don't know for sure. But that didn't break things up. As a matter of fact I think it made things worse.

Buckeye Lake Park during the summer, as I have already indicated, was a gathering place and it was a regular thing that our gang from Hebron came out on Saturday nights and we would meet them at the inter-urban. This was dance night at Buckeye Lake.

### Innovations And Transition

DSM:

During the period of my growing up during the country school days and high school days a number of important things happened which stand out in my memory. Probably the first one was the initiation





of the rural free mail delivery in our area which happened about 1900. Incidentally one of our neighbors who was a law into himself never put in a mailbox and didn't accept mail from the rural free delivery because he said then he would have no excuse to go to town. He drove to town to get his mail all the rest of his life.

Our first telephone, a party line with eight families on it, on which our ring was five, came when I was probably around eleven or twelve years of age. This was quite a thrill and of course it was used for many things besides business. One thing that I recall quite vividly was that the chap who was the beau of one girl who worked for us used to bring his Edison phonograph along occasionally. It had the horn, the round wax records that he kept in cotton and pulled out with two fingers and slipped onto the cylinder. He had the usual group of songs and music of that day and an occasional record of Josh Billings such as the one about the lightening rod salesman.

My Dad used to call up cousins and others clear across the county and at other exchanges Potaskala and Jersey and got them on the line and would say "Now we're going to play 'Listen To The Mockingbird'." Then he would set the receiver down on the little shelf and it would play away and then he would go back and check. Maybe they would play four or five tunes for them. They kept the phone busy often but fortunately nobody was calling a doctor at that time.

My first automobile ride was an important event. It probably happened about 1902 or 1903. Two gentlemen came walking up an alternate lane we had which wasn't used a great deal and left their car down on the road which was more than a quarter of a mile away to see whether or not they could leave their automobile in our barn or shed. When Dad told them that they might, they invited us to go down with them and ride up.

It was one of the early Buicks which had a door in the back with a step, that you used to step up into from behind. My brother and I got in and of



course we were bumping each other with elbows and giggling and having a great time. It was quite a thrill. The ride was less than a half mile. Somewhere between a quarter and a half mile but it seemed like a worthwhile ride to us.

The coming of free natural gas and the advent of a furnace to supply central heat was one of the greatest things that happened to me during my young life.

The purchase of our first automobile in 1913 was a big event. This did not happen until I was in college. I remember quite distinctly that we debated between buying an Oakland and a Studebaker. We finally bought the Studebaker because it had jump seats and would haul seven passengers instead of five in a pinch even though it was only a four cylinder car. We all learned to drive during this period except my Dad and Mother. Dad tried but when he hit the gate post once he decided he wouldn't ever drive again so the boys did all the driving.

Fords had become quite common by this time. I think the first Ford garage and sales agency was established in our hometown in 1909 and it wasn't very long until model T Fords were beginning to ramble around the countryside and scare all the horses and cause trouble generally.

The period from 1891, the year of my birth, to 1914, the year when I graduated from college, was in reality a period of transition from the horse and buggy days to the machine age throughout the country. This transition I am sure had an important bearing upon my life and future development. The invention of the auto in the early 1890's, and the gradual emergence of the automobile as a means of transportation between 1900 and 1914 had a tremendous impact on communications between people and communities and upon the economy.

During this same period the interurban electric line came into general use, particularly in the Midwest. The coming of the Rural Free Delivery and the rural telephone lines were particularly important



Self binders for grain, with sheaf carriers also arrived during this period. The development of the combine harvester which nowadays is common came later.

Intermingled with all the hard farm work and onerous chores there were many pleasures which helped to make life livable. There were always horses to ride for both business and pleasure. Rabbit hunting with dog and no gun in the early years and later both rabbit and quail hunting were fun times. Fishing in the summer was a good sport and we had good fishing spots within walking distance.

Evenings around the fire in the winter with apples and popcorn were also fun. Social affairs at the country school were well attended and added to the social life of the community. Later teenage parties were quite common during our high school days.

### College Years

DSM: I had a bit of a problem in coming to a decision about where to attend college. My Father wanted me to attend Ohio Wesleyan and he was hoping that I would be his one son that might be willing to become a Methodist minister. I'm sure he felt very badly that I didn't do this but instead I made a decision to go to the College of Agriculture at Ohio State University.

This decision was probably influenced by the fact that a Penn State graduate by the name of Clarence Henry had arrived in the community about the time I was a high school freshman, as the superintendent of the Whereley Farm. The Whereley family were the owners of a large stove foundry in Newark and they had a large farm between Hebron and Newark. "Pat" Henry was receiving \$1200 per year and living quarters for managing this large farm and this seemed like a tremendous income. In addition job opportunities for





agricultural graduates appeared to be available with good paying salaries rather generally. So I enrolled in the fall of 1910 in the College of Agriculture.

On my first day on the campus I met a cousin of one of our local girls with whom I had gone to high school. Her name was Gladys Reese. She introduced me to a young man by the name of Chester Engle who immediately asked me to go with him to his fraternity house for lunch. I had had no experience whatsoever with fraternities but it so happened that this introduction led to my accepting the pledge from the Alpha Zeta fraternity which was an agricultural fraternity.

This proved to be a very important factor in my college work I'm sure mainly because of the fact that the fraternity had a record of good grades. On the whole they were excellent students and the older members of the fraternity, juniors and seniors, saw to it that the younger members were doing their work properly and if they needed help they didn't hesitate to do the kind of kindly tutoring which was very often needed.

My grades were only average during my college years. It seems that I had no aspirations to be an honor or merit student. I learned after my first several months in school that I could get passing grades by going to the library in between classes and laboratory periods during the day and then I spent too much time playing cards in the evening or on trips downtown to shows and in other recreational activities which took up time that might well have been devoted to my school work.

I did pass all my courses however, with only one condition and that came about because of my poor art work in Zoology Laboratory. After I received the condition I went to see Doctor Osburn about it. He was my lecture and classroom work professor. He was a kindly, elderly gentleman and he said he didn't understand it because his grade book showed that I had a grade of between ninety and one hundred in his class work and finally he asked me who my lab instructor was and I told him Professor Barrows. With a





kindly and knowing grin he said "I think you had better see Professor Barrows." I did and I found that he was the one that gave me the condition. It was agreed that if I passed off the second semester satisfactorily in his lab I wouldn't need to take an exam to pass off the condition. I'm sure that he may have been sorry about this later because I never left the lab on any lab day without getting his approval of the work that I had done. Anyhow I did pass the course and it was the only condition that I received during the four years.

Along about the time I was a sophomore I happened to be around the fraternity house one evening when almost everybody else was out and two of the alumni who were then attached to the university came by and sat down on our porch to visit. Jack Livingston who was teaching Agronomy, field crops to be exact, was one of those. After we had talked awhile he asked me what I was going to select as a major. I told him I didn't know; I supposed animal husbandry. This seemed to be the popular thing in those days. He said "Well, a lot of people seem to think that that is the thing to do but I'll tell you what to do. You decide to major in Agronomy and field crops and when you get through I'll see to it that you have a job if you want one." This impressed me and I suppose it was a real factor in my determining to specialize in the Agronomic field.

At the beginning of my sophomore year I moved into the fraternity house and my roommate was a chap by the name of Ralph Kenny who was already specializing in Agronomy and we got to be very close friends and he was most helpful to me.

Later on when he graduated he took up work at the University of Kentucky as an instructor in Agronomy and assistant at the Agricultural Experiment Station. This happened at the beginning of my junior year and later on he had a job offer from Kansas State College, at Manhattan, Kansas, and decided to take it. He recommended me for his replacement at the University of Kentucky.



When this happened I was in the first semester of my senior year. I was taking a course in soils under Dr. McCall who was head of the Agronomy Department and during this time he gave an exam shortly before the holidays which somehow or other I didn't seem to be able to do much about. Out of ten questions I had only answered four during the hour. In other words I flunked the exam out and out.

It was rather interesting though, during the holidays Prof. McCall had gone to Lexington, Kentucky, to judge a corn show and to appear on their Farmer's Week program at the university. When he returned he called me aside and said "Myer, what was the matter with you on the examination we gave before the holidays?" I said "I have no excuse whatsoever. I simply didn't have time to finish the exam. I was too slow in making up my mind in regard to the answers and I just missed it." Well he said "I was down in Kentucky during the holidays and Prof. Roberts asked me about you and I recommended you for the job which Ralph Kenny is leaving."

I could have thrown my arms around him but I didn't. I thought it was a great gesture on his part. He told me he thought I could do the job. As a consequence, I went to Kentucky in mid-year. They asked me to come down to see them in January which I did and they decided they would like to have me join the staff. As a consequence I arranged to go down and start teaching during the second semester.

In the meantime Dean Price of the College of Agriculture at Ohio State was teaching a course in farm management which was the only required course that I hadn't completed, but I still had eight hours total that I needed to complete in order to graduate. Dean Price agreed that I might go to Kentucky and substitute for his course as well as to take the extra credit hours on a part time basis and to transfer my credits back to Ohio in June of 1914 to get my degree. This I did.

To go back for a moment to my college life. It seems to me to have been somewhat uneventful. The greatest thing that happened to me was that I was



given an opportunity to become an Alpha Zeta. I had some wonderful friends among this group plus a great deal of contact with agricultural leaders who had graduated from the fraternity and in many ways I profited from having been a member of the organization.

Social activities were largely fraternity affairs with occasional dances or parties, attendance at the theater was usually limited to "peanut gallery" seats for shows and of course these seats were cheap but we went very often as good shows came into town. They had a new theater called the Hartman Theater in Columbus and we used to go down and stand in line late in the day to get a good seat in "peanut heaven." Occasionally we went to the old Munich, or later to the Kaiserhoff cafes for a bit of a drinking bout. I look back on some of these parties as not only interesting but fun.

I think I may have already mentioned a young lady who I had gone with all through high school and through most of college during this period. While we had some dates during the last year or two of college for the most part I had dates with other girls during this time. It was when I went to Kentucky to take over my new job that I stopped by to pick up the jewelry that I had given her and to bid her goodbye.

#### My Years At The University of Kentucky -- The First Job

DSM: During my two years at the University of Kentucky I served as instructor in Agronomy in the Kentucky Agriculture College and assistant in Agronomy at the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station. Most of my work at the experiment station was during the summer season after school was out in the spring and before it started in the fall, although I did have some contact with experimental work throughout the year.





My pay for the first five months during the time when I was finishing up my school work for needed credits was \$50 per month which was later raised to \$83.33 per month for the rest of the time that I was there. In other words I was getting on a full time basis \$1,000 a year.

During this period I taught courses in cereal crops and forage crops to both the two year students and the four year students, also taught a course in farm weeds which had not been taught before and which I had to prepare for in great detail. I assisted in the soil laboratory during one of these years and during the first summer I assisted Prof. S.C. Jones in Soil Survey work in Franklin County, Kentucky, and in Graves County, Kentucky. This work consisted mainly in taking soil samples with a soil auger and labeling them to conform to the soil map in which the soil types had been mapped.

I was given the responsibility for the wheat variety tests and the soy bean variety tests during my second year.

During these two years I really learned how to study efficiently for the first time. It was necessary in order to keep ahead of my various classes and it's only too bad that I hadn't learned how to do an efficient job of studying before I graduated from college.

I had two wonderful years in the lush and beautiful blue grass country where they raised thoroughbred horses, tobacco, and other farm crops and also good dairy cattle and good beef cattle. It was a beautiful country and I never tired of traveling around through the countryside. It was an interesting and profitable two years and in spite of the fact that I was getting only \$1,000 a year I saved \$200 a year out of my very limited salary.

I had two wonderful bosses; Prof. George Roberts who was head of the department was one and Mr. Ed Kinny who really had charge of the crops work and was more closely related to my particular field than was





Prof. Roberts and was second in command. He not only taught field crops but he also was a geneticist. These two gentlemen trusted me implicitly and delegated experimental work and teaching spots as well as speaking engagements throughout the state. I had full support on everything I did. This trust and support was an important factor in the development of badly needed selfconfidence and provided experience in public speaking and in student relations as well as in research techniques and knowledge.

In addition to good relations with my own department and bosses, my living arrangements were such that during the last several months of my stay in Lexington I was closely associated with professors and instructors in the fields of Veterinary Medicine, Horticulture, and Poultry. This provided an opportunity to gain knowledge in fields that were helpful later as I entered county agent work and extension work in Indiana.

About my only recreation during this stay in Kentucky, particularly during the first year, was usually a vaudeville show on Saturday night. I had very few dates during my time there. I went bowling with some of my friends who boarded at the same boarding house as I did. Some of us enjoyed long Sunday walks through the blue grass countryside and after I moved into the household where there were a number of friends whom I have mentioned from the Veterinary, Horticulture and Poultry Departments we occasionally had penny ante games which got a little bit out of hand shortly before I left. However I never lost much money in the penny ante games. I did develop some very excellent friendships with some wonderful people, some of whom I have kept in touch with throughout the rest of my life.

My old friend and boss Edwin Kinny passed away only a few months ago. He came to Washington to live with a daughter for his last few years and I visited him on a number of occasions and we enjoyed talking about old times during 1914 and 1915.



Prof. George Roberts, who was head of the department, recommended me for a raise each year but the dean didn't feel that a raise was important. He was a chemist. If I had been a chemist I would have been more important in his eyes. So after the second turn-down I was somewhat disgusted so I sat down and wrote a letter to Prof. S.C. Jones who I had aided in soil survey work in 1914 and who had moved to Purdue University in the meantime. After bringing him up to date on the local gossip and telling him of my frustration I rather lightly told him that if he saw any jobs lying around loose in my field to let me know.

He took me seriously and upon receipt of my letter he immediately recommended me to T.A. Coleman, the County Agent leader for Indiana, as a prospective county agent. His recommendation worked and I was invited to Purdue for an interview and as a result I was ultimately hired as the first County Agricultural Agent for Vanderburgh County, at Evansville, Indiana.





Frank Metsker, a demonstrator showing nitrogen-nodules on roots of soy bean plants. Vanderburgh County, 1917.



Dillon S. Myer as a young County Agricultural Agent in Vanderburgh County, Indiana in 1916 or 1917. Taken beside the Court House in his usual summertime garb of white shirt, bow tie and cap.



Dillon Myer, a young instructor at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and Assistant at the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, visiting the Sudan grass experimental plots. This plot was a combination of Sudan grass and soy beans. September 1, 1915.



A group of young men connected with the College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky. All roomed at the same address. Dillon Myer in front, Instructor in Agronomy and Assistant in the Agricultural Experiment Station. All of the others were veterinarians except John Carmody, Dillon Myer's roommate, who was a horticulturist. 1915.





## CHAPTER V

## MATURING AS A YOUNG COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AGENT IN INDIANA

DSM: I resigned my position at the University of Kentucky effective February 1, 1916 and after a month's training with three older county agents in Indiana, one week each, I reported to Evansville as a young inexperienced county agent on March 1, 1916.

I was fortunate in that I had been assigned to work for a week with Clarence Henry in Allen County who had been a county agent there for some time and with Cal McIntosh in Green County, Indiana, and later with Roy Marshall in Gibson County which was just to the north of Vanderburgh County. I learned a great deal from all three of these men about the technique of county agent work which was not generally available excepting through experience and word of mouth from an agent who had had experience, because there weren't too many agents in those days and there was very little on the record about the work of county agents.

Before reporting for duty at Evansville, I asked the county agent leader Mr. Tom Coleman what I should do. He said "Go down and go to work. You know as much about the job as I do." So I was on my own in a strange country, but I soon found friends.

The township trustees who were also the county school board or the county board of education rather were responsible for the approval of the county agent. Most of them were quite helpful once I had been approved and was on the job. They helped to arrange meetings for the purpose of getting acquainted.

The county superintendent of schools, Mr. Floyd Ragland, was a real friend and supporter. He was a valuable advisor to a young upstart of twenty-five years who was assuming to advise farmers regarding the problems of crops, livestock production and marketing, and the establishing of 4H Club program.





In those days there was a requirement that \$500 be raised locally in the county to provide for office furnishing before Purdue University would recommend a county agent for the job and before putting in state and federal funds to help pay the county agent's salary. In the case of Vanderburgh County the Evansville Courier, which was the leading newspaper in that part of the state, took on the task of helping to raise the money through small subscriptions from farmers and others and I think actually put up about half of the \$500 themselves in order to meet the requirement of the \$500 fund.

The office which was assigned to the county agent was in the courthouse just next door to the Sheriff's office on a main corridor and across from the County Clerk's office. It was well located and quite satisfactory, from the standpoint of giving a new county agent a chance to get acquainted with people, because of the easy access.

The office, of course, had to be equipped throughout. We bought desks, chairs, typewriter, files, tables, and all of the accoutrements of a normal office plus some bookcases that I had made by a carpenter or cabinetmaker and a bulletin rack which would hold thirty-two bulletins which lay flat in a pocket which was tilted so that they were easy to see and easy to read. This provided the kind of bulletin distribution center which helped get people acquainted with what literature was available in the various agriculture fields.

I also had purchased a number of text and reference books in the various fields that I thought would be helpful. I laid in a supply of Purdue and U.S. Agriculture Department bulletins for reference work. I found that all of these things came in very handy later because there were many times that I needed to look up information which I did not have at hand.

I found one small publication from the University of California, that was written by B.H. Crocheron who was Agriculture Extension Director in California, on the subject of county agent work in Humboldt County, California. This publication was the only one of its



type that I know of in existence at that time. Director Crocheron had described in simple language and quite completely the everyday work of the county agent in a California county, including a description of various types of method demonstration which taught people how to do things with their hands or with equipment; also result demonstrations which involved getting the cooperation of some good farmer to plant crops or to carry out certain practices that would end up in the kind of results that could be brought to the attention of people through a meeting at a later date, to view the results or to discuss the results. He also discussed the use of farm visits, and office calls, project meetings, general meetings and other techniques that had been used by the county agent in Humbolt County.

I found this publication tremendously helpful because as I have pointed out earlier, excepting for the contact I had had with the three county agents that I had spent some time with before I came on the job in Indiana and some general knowledge that I had gathered during the two years while I was in Kentucky I had no very specific information regarding the job of a county agent. This particular bulletin gave me the idea that I should map out a program of my own and I began to lay plans for various types of projects which I thought were adaptable to Vanderburgh County and made plans for carrying out these projects.

### More About Kentucky

DSM: I would like to revert to my experience at the University of Kentucky briefly. I found that during my experience in county agent work that the knowledge that I had gained as a specialist in the Agronomic field, especially my work with wheat varieties and with fertilizer plots and with the soy bean varieties which I had charge of under the general



supervision of Ed Kinny during the last year I was in Kentucky, was highly valuable because the soy bean crop was new and not generally familiar to farmers throughout the country.

### My Only Scientific Publication

DSM: Also I have forgotten to mention the fact that the only scientific publication that I ever have been a party to was published while I was at the University. On my first visit to Lexington to be looked over by Prof. Roberts and Prof. Kinny, we had taken a trip over the farm and on the way back we walked through a small five-acre alfalfa field where we found many dead alfalfa plants. Upon examination we realized that there was a disease that was causing this trouble.

After I arrived on the job I signed up for a course in Plant Pathology under Prof. Gilbert in the Botany Department and we discussed this particular disease. After some discussion Prof. Roberts suggested that we make this a project of my course with Prof. Gilbert and that we prepare a bulletin on it. So as a result we proceeded to do so.

Prof. Gilbert had some knowledge of German and I had had a little, very little. We found that about the only literature in the field which had to do with the particular disease that we found in the alfalfa field was German literature. So night after night we went out to Prof. Gilbert's office and I would help to look up the meaning of words as he found that he didn't quite know the meaning and he did the translating thus we hammered out a translation of the publications that we found in this field and I think we did a very good job of it.

Following that then Prof. Gilbert did some laboratory work and checking out the microscopic





work and so on that needed to be done and since I was traveling occasionally around the state I did the field observation work and the contacts throughout the state as to the spread of this disease in alfalfa and clover. As a result we came up with a publication entitled "Stem Rot of Clovers and Alfalfa as a Cause of Clover Sickness" by A.H. Gilbert and D.S. Myer.

The particular disease that we had found was known scientifically as *Sclerotinia Trifoliorum*. This was a fungus and the name came from the fact that they were resting bodies at a certain stage in the life cycle of the disease known as *Sclerotinia*. They were a dark blueish or purplish type of nodule that we found in the alfalfa field when we first discovered the disease at the University of Kentucky.

I got so interested at this particular stage in this particular disease as well as in plant pathology generally that I considered going to Cornell University and taking graduate work in this field with the expectation of becoming a specialist in the field. I'm very fortunate that I decided not to do so because I realized later that I never would have had the patience or the continued interest in doing the careful scientific laboratory work that was necessary in order to be a top plant pathologist.

However, this was a worthwhile experience and it did stimulate my interest in the field of plant diseases and plant problems, and led me to do a good deal of reading and research in this field which was helpful to me in my county agent work.

### Soil Fertility Theories

DSM:        There is one other phase of my work at the University of Kentucky that I found helpful after I left the University and got into county agent work. There was a wide difference of opinion among





scientists throughout the world on what was causing some of the problems in the field of soil fertility. There were about five different major theories extant at that time and each of the folks who had developed a theory were very adamant in their belief that they were right about what was causing problems in the reduction of crop yields.

One of them concerned the lack of fertilizer elements and particularly the lack of phosphate. Prof. Hopkins at the University of Illinois was a great advocate of the use of rock phosphate in its natural state, simply ground rock phosphate, when applied with clover and legume crops turned under would do very well in the black soils of Illinois and consequently he had a tendency to ascribe most of the ills of crop production to lack of phosphates.

On the other hand, Dr. Bolley of the University of North Dakota who had the problem of trying to find the answer to their so-called Flax Sickness, learned that through crop rotation they could continue to grow flax, provided that they did rotate crops over a period of four or five years and not put the same crop in the same soil year after year. As a consequence of his studies in this field he began to insist through his writings that the limitation on crop production and the lowering of yields was due almost entirely to plant disease.

Prof. Whitney of the Bureau of Soils and Chemistry in Washington had developed a so-called toxic theory in which he insisted that the growth of crops in the soil had over a period of time gradually thrown off a toxic substance and that it was this toxic condition that was causing reduced yields. He felt very strongly about his theory.

A scientist at the Rothamstead Experiment Station in England had developed an amoeba theory in which he said that there was a type of amoeba in the soil that was seemingly on the increase after crops were grown for a number of years that caused the trouble.

My own Prof. George Roberts believed that there were various reasons for reduced crop yields depending



upon the type of soils and their condition. He was an advocate in areas of clay soil in particular of the use of acid phosphate instead of rock phosphate and of other mineral fertilizers in areas where they were needed. For example in muck land he felt potash should be used but not necessarily in clay lands. He felt that on clay lands if you grew legumes and the land was properly limed, if it needed lime, to grow legumes normally about all you would need was phosphate because the legumes would provide the nitrogen and there was generally ample potash in the soil that could be made available if it had the right treatment otherwise.

So the argument went along. The fertilizer companies, particularly the Federal Chemical Company at Louisville were very very adamant that mixed fertilizers should be used. In other words they were very strong for selling something like 2-8-2 which was two percent of nitrogen, eight percent phosphate and two percent potash or a 4-8-4 or a 4-10-6 or something of that kind and they were against the idea of the use of a single element of mineral fertilizer.

I lived in the midst of this battle for a couple of years and read everything that came before me in regard to it. So when I got on to the job at Evansville I was pretty well prepared for the arguments which were current and I knew something about the type of fertilization that seemed to be required on the various types of soil that we had in Vanderburgh County because of my knowledge of the detailed experimental work had been carried on with the various soil types in Kentucky. Some of these soil types were quite similar to those that we had in Vanderburgh County.

Prof. Roberts had established soil experimental fields all over the state to supplement what they were doing at the college at Lexington because the blue grass soils in the Lexington area were very high in phosphate, were highly fertile if properly handled and were quite different than the so-called mountain country of the east and the pennyroyal country of the western part of the state. So he had established



these various fields and I had been conversant with the results. This was all very helpful.

In addition to that, in my association with my roommate John Carmody, who was a horticulturalist, I learned a great deal about horticulture. When I found that I was going to take on a job where I may need to have wider knowledge I didn't hesitate to use the opportunity to learn about a lot of practical things that I had forgotten about or which I had never learned.

The same thing was true in the field of animal diseases with my veterinarian friends and regarding modern poultry production from my friends whom I lived with or associated with, men who were poultrymen. The experience as an instructor and as assistant at the experiment station for two years was worthwhile, therefore, from the standpoint of my technical training for county agent work.

#### Back To Vanderburgh County: Getting Acquainted

DSM: In addition to the early meetings in the county which were arranged largely through the township trustees for the purpose of getting acquainted with the farmers in the various communities and having them get acquainted with the new county agent. I used the opportunity when I was not otherwise occupied to get into my car and drive out through the various areas of the county, keeping my eyes open. These drives were made for the purpose of getting acquainted with people.

If I saw somebody over in the field and they weren't too busily occupied, if they were stopping for example to rest the horses or if they were having a little tractor trouble, I would pull up to the side of the road and go over to the fence and introduce myself as the county agent and very often in





those early days they would say "Agent for what?" and I would have to explain that I wasn't selling automobiles or farm machinery. Then I would explain briefly what the county agent's job was, the fact that I was the new agent, and made many acquaintances in this way.

I also kept my eyes open to learn more at first hand about the farming operations, the type of practices that were being utilized, the type of equipment that farmers were using, type of crops that were grown, and the methods they were using in the cultivation and harvesting, and various problems of crop handling, as well as the kind of livestock, and how they were equipped to handle livestock, etc., etc.

I found these drives highly valuable and informative and after a while, of course, I got to the place where there were certain stops that I nearly always made because there were key people in nearly every township or community as I began to get acquainted who were interested in my work. A stop for a short visit with them very often led to another lead about something that maybe should be done, or I would pick up information about the reaction of various people in the community toward the meetings or toward the demonstrations that were being carried on, and various subjects that would come up that were helpful to me.

I found that it was highly desirable that I store up all the detailed information that I could, not only about the farming and farming practices and what I could see for myself or what I could learn from them, but about the people and their attitudes. I remember one day, for example, driving along the road and seeing a chap by the name of Jake Walker cultivating corn with a disk cultivator. He was doing what they called barring out in those days. I was sure he was cutting off many corn roots so I climbed over the fence and followed him, when he wasn't looking, for one row through and when I ended up at the end of the row I had two hands full of corn roots. He turned around and saw me and said "Where did you get those?" and I said "You cut them off on the way through." It was this kind of thing that





helped me to bring to the attention of farmers certain lessons that I was trying to bring to them.

As a matter of fact, we suggested shallow cultivation not too close to the corn plant in those days. They had been in the habit of cutting in as close as they could and cutting off most of the young roots. I remember one old gentleman when we talked about this particular problem, Mr. Mitchen, who said he thought it was a good thing for corn roots to be pulled and jerked around like that; that it was good for them and I said "What do you think would happen if somebody went into your entrails and pulled them around and jerked them around like you're talking about with the corn roots?" and everybody laughed. They got the point very quickly.

#### Making An Impression By Demonstrating Know How

HP: Would it be possible for a man to become a county agent who had not had the kind of farm experience you had?

DSM: Well, a county agent had to be well trained. If he had not lived or was not reared on a farm, he had to have some kind of farm experience. I have known a few city boys who have become county agents but they are always handicapped a bit because there were certain things that didn't come as natural to them as they did to some of us.

I was asked many times to do certain practical things. For example, if I stopped by some place where they were cultivating corn and trying out a new cultivator somebody would look at me with a grin and say "Why don't you take it for a round or two." I was always delighted and I would climb onto a cultivator and take the team through the field and show them that I knew how to handle a team and cultivator and it always helped.



I remember one day out in Armstrong township where Henry Kissel lived, there was a chap by the name of William Hepler who had bought a new Tower cultivator. The Tower cultivator was different than the normal cultivators in that it didn't have the shovels of the type that most of the cultivators had but it had knives. It just happened that when I was a kid I grew up with a Tower cultivator. Ours was a walking type but I knew how to adjust them, then we got a riding one before I left home so I learned to use it.

I stopped by the house and Mrs. Hepler said "Oh, Will's back in the back field and they are trying out a new cultivator." Well, I met him about half way back and he was in a bad sweat and a bad humor. I said "What's the trouble?" He said "Oh, that God damn cultivator. I'm going to toss the damned thing into a fence corner and forget about it." I said "What is it?" He told me. I said "Is it back there?" He said "David is using it." David was his oldest boy. I said "I'll go back there and see what David is doing and see what I can do about it." When I got there I found that the cultivator was as completely out of kilter as they could possibly get it.

They had the blades every-which-way and it took me about a full round, stopping every little while to use my wrench making some adjustments until I got it so it would function. When I got back after making a full round and after making probably a dozen stops and making some adjustments here and there, it was doing very well. The soil was a little too wet to cultivate, but nevertheless it did work. So I said "Get on, David, and let's see you take it. Now don't you touch it, you just use it this way." So he did and they were just delighted with the fact that somebody knew how to handle it.

I got in touch with the salesman and said "You don't have any business selling a new piece of equipment into any community like this and then going off without spending some time to see that these people know how to use it."



It was this kind of thing that added zest to the job because you knew certain things that nobody else in the community knew and you were able to demonstrate them and I got a thrill out of it.

### Field Demonstrations And Dealer Cooperation

DSM: In addition to the other activities in the county, we had a number of demonstrations in the use of ground limestone for the correction of soil acidity so as to secure better stands of clover. We also had fertilizer demonstrations using acid phosphate for increased crop yields. After we had received some results in this area I arranged for a meeting with the fertilizer dealers in the county as well as from surrounding counties.

I explained to them that I didn't believe that most farmers needed a so-called complete fertilizer which means fertilizers which have nitrogen, phosphate, and potash but if they raised clover or other legumes to provide the nitrogen and if their soil condition was such that potash could become available, there was plenty of it in the type of clay soils which existed in most of the county. Consequently the limiting factor was phosphate.

So I explained to these dealers that we were going to recommend the use of what was then generally considered the best phosphate fertilizer because it was readily available. That was twenty percent acid phosphate which meant raw phosphate rock treated with sulphuric acid to make the phosphate more available.

In addition to some of our local friends who had already attended the meeting with the seedmen that we had earlier, a chap by the name of Garrison who was the regional or area representative for the Federal Chemical Company of Louisville, Kentucky,





came to the meeting. After I had explained what we were proposing to do and why we were doing it and asked their cooperation in handling acid phosphate, Mr. Garrison spoke up and said "Well, Mr. Myer, these people won't handle acid phosphate. Farmers are accustomed to a complete fertilizer and the dealers will want to handle a complete fertilizer. There is no use talking about it." So I said "All right Mr. Garrison, suppose we leave it to the dealers." So I put it to a vote and of course they wouldn't vote me down and three or four of them said they would be glad to handle it. Mr. Garrison was very unhappy because of the prospect of diminished profits but we had won.

Among those in attendance was an elderly gentleman by the name of John Schlensker, a good old German from out in the north part of the county, who had never handled much fertilizer but he had been handling one car load a year for a group of farmers in that area for a number of years. So after the meeting was over he ordered a car load of acid phosphate from the Welch Chemical Company of New Albany, Indiana. He got a letter back saying that they couldn't ship a full car load of acid phosphate. They would have to ship half a car load of 2-8-2 which was two percent nitrogen, eight percent phosphate and two percent potash versus twenty percent phosphate.

So he brought the letter into my office and said "What will I do about it?" I said "Mr. Schlensker, if I write a letter on plain paper would you sign it?" He said "Yes." So I wrote a letter playing the part of Mr. Schlensker. I said that I was not interested in any 2-8-2 fertilizer. I wanted a car load of acid phosphate and if they couldn't ship it please let me know immediately because I wanted to order it from another company. This incidentally was the company that he had been dealing with for years. Well, he got his acid phosphate and he came in as tickled as a boy with a new pair of boots after it rolled in.





Several months later after I had moved into Purdue as Assistant County Agent Leader, I had a meeting up in northern Indiana on the farm of Warren McCray, who was a cattle breeder and later was the Governor of Indiana and of his brother-in-law George Ade, the writer. During one of the breaks Ray Ellis, who was the general manager of the fertilizer company in New Albany who had gotten this letter came around and shook hands with me and he said "Dillon, how is your friend John Schlensker?" I said "Well, the last time I saw him he was fine. He's a nice chap." He looked me straight in the eye and said "You wrote that letter that John Schlensker sent me, didn't you?" I said "Ray, John Schlensker got his acid phosphate, didn't he?" He said "Yes, damn it."

Sometime after this incident I was visiting in one of the surrounding counties and came upon a chap who was serving as agent for the New Albany company and we got to talking about their business and I said "Do you sell much mixed fertilizers now-a-days down in the pocket, in the area surrounding Vanderburgh County?" He said "Yes. We sell it every place excepting Vanderburgh County and thanks to you we sell acid phosphate in Vanderburgh County." Which was, of course, what I had hoped to hear.

Other than the activities of the 4H club members in pig clubs, poultry clubs, and in a few cases calf club members we had very little work in the field of livestock production other than meetings on dairy rations; however we also organized a cow testing association which I have mentioned elsewhere.

This was an association of twenty-six members that hired a tester who came around once a month to test their milk for butter fat, weigh up the volume and then figure what the production of each of the cows was for the month.

Some of the folks who signed up in the cow testing association were amazed and surprised at how good the records of some of their cows were.



### War Gardens And Aphids

DSM:        During April of 1917, which was the beginning of my second year as county agent, World War I broke out and with it came war gardens which were recommended generally.

It so happened that during the spring and summer which followed we had the worst infestation of aphids that I have ever known. Most of the war gardeners were growing potatoes and their young potato vines became covered with aphids which are plant lice that suck the juices out of the plant. I had literally, it seemed to me, hundreds of office calls, people coming in or calling up asking how to get rid of aphids.

I learned something out of this experience. At that time there were three different remedies for aphids. One of them was whale oil soap which was made into an emulsion, another one was coal oil emulsion which was mixed with whale oil soap and if you didn't get it just right you would burn the plants. A third one which had come onto the market fairly recently was a product called Black Leaf Forty. It was made from tobacco. It had a very high nicotine content and came in a small bottle. When properly diluted in water it was quite effective.

I began to tell people about the three different remedies. I came to realize after watching their faces and watching them linger a bit that they were frustrated. They left in most cases not knowing what to do. I realized that many of them wouldn't do anything because they couldn't make up their minds. So as a result of this experience I began recommending only Black Leaf Forty and there was no problem from that time on because they could go to the drugstore and buy a small bottle with the directions on it.

This taught me a lesson regarding all kinds of remedies of this kind. If there was more than one, from that time on, I picked what I thought was



the right one, and didn't even mention the others because I found that people don't like to make a choice. They like to have somebody make up their mind for them.

Another wartime idea that was widely advertised, that I had many questions about, was growing strawberries in barrels. The process was simply one of filling up the barrel with soil, boring holes about six or eight inches apart all around the barrel and sticking strawberry plants into the holes. This of course appealed to many city gardeners who didn't have garden patches big enough to grow a garden so I had many many calls asking about how to grow strawberries in a barrel.

#### Interest In The County Agent's Politics

DSM: Shortly after I arrived in Evansville I learned that the Democratic party had made a clean sweep the previous fall in the elections and they had cleaned out the courthouse of all Republicans with the exception possibly of the County Superintendent of Schools.

Of course they didn't know the politics of the new county agent. This was something that was very important to some of the folks who were hangers-on around the courthouse so I was questioned time and again and various approaches were used to learn my politics. They tried to slip up on me by such questions as whether I had joined the torch light parade the night before when one of the parties was having a parade and that sort of thing.

Finally a chap by the name of George Wegel who was a Socialist and a loud mouth Socialist who lived out in Knight township, came into the office one day. He and I had learned to know each other pretty well and we bantered back and forth and kidded each other.





On this particular day he came into the office and went over my office with a fine tooth comb and asked me what everything in the office cost including the typewriter, the desk, everything that we had that we had purchased. He stayed quite a long time.

Not too long after he left I went across to the clerk's office to buy some stamps which I usually did when I needed stamps. A beautiful young girl, Miss Schindler, who usually waited on me, got my stamps for me and then she looked up at me with her beautiful smile and said "Mr. Myer, the people around here are wondering if you are a Socialist?" I said "What do you think?" She said "I don't know." I said "Well let's leave it that way. You just tell them you don't know."

So far as I know they never did find out what my politics was at that time because I didn't tell them and I didn't even register for the primary. I voted in the general elections but not in the primaries.

#### Newspaper Experience And Relations

DSM: As I have mentioned previous to the establishment of the office of the county agent the county was required to raise a minimum of \$500 for the purchase of office supplies, equipment, etc. by voluntary subscription. The Evansville Courier, which was the major newspaper in the county and in "the Pocket" which included about six counties, had helped to raise this money and had probably put up at least half the money in order to assure that the \$500 was available. Sometime after I had arrived on the scene I had been introduced to the editor but I had done very little else about keeping any contact with the paper.





One day Fred Trueblood who was the managing editor called me up and asked me to go to lunch with him, which I did. After we were settled at the table he said "Young man, I would like to remind you that my paper the Evansville Courier helped to raise the money to get you to come here and we expect some cooperation out of you in providing some rural news for the paper." My response was that I wasn't looking for publicity and I didn't believe that I needed any. Then he really jumped with both feet. He said "Let me tell you something of the facts of life. You do need it and you need it very badly. Not only that; you are going to get it and you are going to help get it."

He explained to me that they had recently started a farm page once a week which came out on Friday and he wanted the assistance of my office in providing local copy for the farm page, seasonal items, and anything that was of interest because up to that time they had been using practically entirely the "boiler plate" from some source or other. "Furthermore" he said "we would like to have you either call up or drop into the office after your meetings throughout the county and report on the meetings, how many were there, what was discussed, things of interest to the paper, and to the rural community." So I promised that I would be glad to cooperate.

As a result the farm page at times became practically the county agent's page. I can remember a few times when I had five columns right across the top of the farm page. It happened to be at times when seasonal items were important and the paper didn't hesitate to use them.

Furthermore, I found it most interesting to stop by the Courier office after night meetings in particular when the paper had been pretty well put to bed and was about ready to go to press. The city editor would assign somebody to take my story which usually didn't take very long, and then I would light my pipe and sit down among the reporters who were hashing over the day's news.



I became a member of the staff in a sense. This was a great experience. It was an experience that I never had had. I knew nothing about the inside workings of a newspaper up until this time and needless to say I got a great deal of good support out of the paper. When somebody would propose that we have a meeting out in their community and I would say "Do you want to send out notices?" They would say "Oh just put it in the Courier. Everybody reads the Courier." And they did. That's the way we advertised our meetings. So Fred Trueblood's visit with me proved to be well worthwhile.

### Early Meetings

DSM: Before leaving the subject of Vanderburgh County I want to pay tribute to a gentleman who was a real help and a real sponsor of my program. I think I mentioned earlier that the County Board of Education was the board that had to approve the recommendations of Purdue University as to who came in as county agent. The County Superintendent of Schools, of course, was the executive officer of that board and supervised the schools throughout the county. At that time there was a very wonderful gentleman by the name of Floyd Ragland who was county superintendent. He went with me to the various stores to introduce me and to help me select my office equipment in the beginning.

Furthermore he went with me on several occasions to meetings in the country during the first two or three months and then on the way home in the kindest and nicest manner possible he gave me the kind of criticism that I needed very badly as to how I should talk to farmers. He found that I hadn't realized that having taught two years in the College of Agriculture at the University of Kentucky that instead of talking about ground limestone or just plain burned lime, I was talking about calcium carbonate,



calcium oxide, and using other chemical terms which were quite well known by students who had taken chemistry but were not well known by farmers. This is typical of the type of thing that he pointed out to me and I'm sure that any success that I may have had in the county in my speeches was largely due to Floyd Ragland and his very kindly approach in helping me to orient myself to a new situation.

Since I was the first County Agricultural Agent in Vanderburgh County and since I was a young man of only twenty-four years of age at the time I started my work there, it became very important to use all of the techniques available to me to become acquainted and to find ways and means to gain support and respect for the services which we had to render. Much of our time, of course, was devoted to meetings of various types including community meetings, farm tours, demonstration meetings to show the results of crop treatment or to show how to mix insecticides or for some other reason.

Of course, the use of the press which has already been mentioned became a highly valuable medium, and farm visits to individuals in the community who became standbys as advisors, and as demonstrators and services provided through office calls.

### Learning The Importance Of Remembering Faces And Names

DSM:       The first office caller that I had was a chap by the name of Homer Pierce who lived right out in the edge of the county almost into the adjoining county on a rather poorly drained heavy clay farm. He came in to ask me how to get rid of cattle lice, which as far as I knew did not exist up to this time. I had to admit to him that I didn't know but that I would find out and asked him the next time he was in town to drop in and I would have the answer for him. So





I wrote to Dr. Craig who was the head of the veterinary department at Purdue University and got the information back promptly.

Two or three weeks later Mr. Pierce came swinging into the office again. The minute he stepped through the door I said "Good morning, Mr. Pierce." I thought the man was going to faint, he was so taken aback that I remembered him. He wasn't used to being remembered it seems. He couldn't quite get over the idea that this was a wonderful thing. This response on his part alerted me to the fact that it was highly important that I remember names, remember people, and that I learn to call them by name.

As a result, the young crippled lad who came to work for me as a stenographer and I teamed up to work out a system that would be helpful in remembering people. I recorded every farm visit that I made, why I stopped there and what we talked about, put it on a file card and filed it away alphabetically. I did the same thing if any thing of importance happened in the way of requests for information at meetings, and we did the same thing for office callers.

This young man who served as secretary had worked over most of the county before he was crippled, as a member of a threshing crew, so he knew a lot of people that I didn't know. So if he sensed that I didn't know somebody's name he found ways and means to slip me a bit of paper having the name of the person on it so that I could begin calling him by name. The response was usually very very good. My secretary used to come by a long table where I usually sat down across from the caller and he would act as though he was using the table to help him along to the files. He would put his hand down and leave the slip of paper where the person across the table would not notice, because he was busily occupied in asking questions.





### Get Acquainted Meetings

DSM:       The first few weeks we were there we determined to have a meeting in every community if possible. The township trustees who were the members of the Board of Education which had approved my appointment, generally arranged these meetings and the meetings were for the purpose of letting them see me, the new county agent, to tell them something about what we hoped to do in the way of providing service to the farmers of the county, and for me to have the opportunity to get acquainted with my constituency. After a short talk outlining the duties and the responsibilities of the county agent and what we had hoped to do for them, we always had a question and answer period.

One of the questions that invariably came up during that first spring was the question as to whether or not it was better to plant potatoes in the light of the moon or the dark of the moon. I usually would tell them that my Mother would know the answer to that for sure but I was not quite sure and I was sure their own experience maybe it was as good as mine.

Finally after four or five of such meetings at one in a very German community the chairman of the meeting was a chap by the name of Mr. Kirchof. Mr. Kirchof when that question was asked leaned over to me and said "Ask for a show of hands of how many plant in the dark of the moon and how many plant in the light of the moon." I did just that and they were split almost fifty-fifty. He looked at me and winked and I used that technique time and time again afterwards because they all thought they were right and it answered the question and there was no comeback because everybody was willing to argue among themselves which was right.

When we used to kid my Mother about her belief that the moon affected crops she said "Well, the moon affects the tides, why shouldn't it affect the growing of plants." And we just closed up because we just didn't know. I don't know or didn't at that time; whether they have learned anything about it in the meantime I am not sure.



We had one very interesting community which was just over the edge into Posey County, the adjoining county. The community lapped over into Vanderburgh County. The name of the community was St. Phillips, a Catholic parish, a very rural one. Shortly before I arrived on the scene they started having meetings. The county agent from Posey County attended all of their meetings and he informed me that we were to take turn about. They met once a month in the parish house and they had a priest by the name of Father Verse. About two hundred people turned out at every meeting and they practically hung on to every word that was said. I don't think I have ever seen a hungrier group of people for information then these people were.

They had been isolated for years and after one of the meetings that I attended Father Verse invited me over to his manse to chat a bit. And I said "Father how do you explain getting all of these people out and the interest that you have developed here?" He said "Well, when I came here I found that the priest who had proceeded me had been here for forty years. He never encouraged meetings of any kind, excepting meetings of the church and as a matter of fact he discouraged it and I realized that it was a very backward community and that they needed all the help they could get in modern agricultural practices. I came from up near Notre Dame. I was associated with a community where I learned a good deal about agricultural practices so when I first came here I invited the county agent from Mount Vernon to come over and talk with us. The first meeting was on poultry. We decided to have meetings once a month and you can see the results."

In all my experience I don't think I have ever had a more appreciative or a more satisfactory audience. They would literally keep you on the floor for hours if you would allow them to, asking questions. They were just that hungry for information.

Father Verse was quite an unusual man and this was a very very interesting experience for me.



The county agent's office was on the main floor of the courthouse and as a consequence it came to be the hang out for all the newspapermen who covered the courthouse beat. Occasionally we had rather a rough group because they would come over to get over their hangovers in my office.

A chap who covered my particular office was named Bullock. They decided to put out a special edition of the Evansville Courier and he asked me to write a story about the agriculture of Vanderburgh County. I said "All right, "Bull", I will do so if you won't change it or write a lead on it." He said, "All right." But when the paper came out the lead that he had written said "Myer says that all of Vanderburgh County will be within the city of Evansville within fifty years," and of course I got laughed at around the county but nevertheless Bullock was about right because as I drive back through that part of the country nowadays, fifty years later it appears that he was not far wrong.

### The Soy Bean Story

DSM: The introduction of soy beans into Vanderburgh County is a very interesting story. As assistant at the Kentucky Agriculture Experiment Station in Lexington and during the time I was there, I taught during the winter and spent all my time on experimental and research work during the summer. The supervision of the variety test for soy beans, as well as the wheat research program, was turned over to me to supervise. So I became quite well acquainted with the soy bean, which was not very widely used nor widely known throughout the United States. The seed that we had included about twenty varieties. They were all imported.

HP: From where?





DSM: Mostly from China and Japan.

HP: Is that so? I wonder how it all started--I wonder how the United States finally did realize the soy bean's worth?

DSM: The Bureau of Plant Industry was sending people out all over the world looking for new plants and interesting plants. This was one of the most interesting jobs that they had in the Department of Agriculture.

They started, as a matter of fact, importing new plants before the Department of Agriculture was ever formed. The Patent Office was the agency used if they found something interesting in those early days. So the Bureau of Plant Industry had supplied the seeds for these variety tests.

There was an Agronomist by the name of Morris, who was supervising this program. He visited us two or three times in Kentucky and I went over the program with him. So I got quite well acquainted with the early, the medium, and the late varieties and those that had more seed available.

When I got to Evansville, in Vanderburgh County, Indiana, I found that many of the soils had become so acid that they weren't producing good crops of clover. They needed a legume in the interim that would help produce nitrogen as well as provide a change in rotation. So I started recommending soy beans.

At that time about the only soy beans that was on the market was a variety called Mammoth Yellow. It was a very late bean and normally in that area it didn't mature at all. It would get frosted before the seed would mature. It was a good bean if you wanted to plow it under because it grew up very high. That is about all they had, so I started recommending a bean called Hollybrook and two or three others, medium varieties, that would mature in that area.

It didn't occur to me that the dealers would not have them. I should have known it but I didn't think





it through. One day I came by a farm owned by Billy Erskine. Billy was a slow talking, awfully nice guy and one of my better friends. He said "I ran into a chap the other day that is awfully mad at you." I said "What's his name?" He said "Owen Monroe," and I said "Where is he?" He said "At the Heldt Seed Company." I said "What's he mad about?" He said "I went in and asked him if they had some Hollybrook soy beans and he looked at me and said 'Who in God's name is recommending this variety of bean' and I said the County Agent. He said 'Let me show you something,' so he took me to the back of the store, up a few steps and showed me a great big bin of Mammoth Yellow beans and he said 'We haven't sold one peck of these beans since this County Agent started recommending other varieties and we're stuck.'." I said "I guess I'd better go in and see him." So the next day I did go in to see him.

I went in and introduced myself to Owen Monroe and he said "Come with me." He just turned on his heel and went back and took me up some steps to show me this bin. He said "See what you've done?", and I said "Yes, I do and I'm very regretful and it's a mistake on my part and we'll see if we can't do something about it." He said "What can you do?" I said "Well, I would like to have a meeting of the seed dealers of the county. Would you come?" He said "Yes I'd come but I don't think anybody else would come." I said "Would you help me by giving me the names of the various seed dealers that you know about?" "Sure", he said. So I got a piece of paper, sat down and listed a group of names.

We sent out a notice calling them to a meeting and told them in the notice that we wanted to talk about the soy bean crop, securing the soy bean seed of the type adapted to that area. About five dealers came; one was a wholesaler and about four others. I apologized for what I had done and said "What I'd like to do is to settle on two or three key varieties that we can use in this area; one early, one medium, and Mammoth Yellow if someone wants to turn the crop under. But there won't be many people who will want to do that; so I think the medium one will be the major one because it will mature here."



Usually by the time the beans are harvested for seed the leaves have already dropped off but if a farmer is going to turn it under he usually does it while the plant is still green enough that the whole crop becomes humus. However, the bean was increasingly valuable for seed, because it was beginning to be in demand.

I said "I'll tell you what I'll do, if you will make a deal with me. I'll locate seed supplies for you, tell you where you can get them, if you will stock them, and do one other thing. Some of these supplies may be a bit short and you may not be able always to have them in stock and if you don't, I would like to have you suggest other dealers who might have them. I'll keep informed about who has the beans and who hasn't." About three of them agreed. Owen Monroe was one of them. By golly, we put soy beans on the map! It wasn't more than a year until the Pratt Brothers, who had a seed supply store, were shipping them in by the car load.

HP: Because the soil really needed them, and the farmers realized it?

DSM: The farmers needed a new crop and soy beans were almost entirely free of insect damage and disease. Because it was a new crop in the area.

HP: Was it used exclusively for feed for cattle?

DSM: Well in those days it was generally used for seed.

The beans could be ground and mixed with other feeds for it was high in protein and high in oil. Actually it was a little too high in oil, and it wasn't very digestible unless it was ground. The farmers in Vanderburgh County because of the fact that we were sort of out in the forefront, could sell them as seed, you see, to other people who wanted them.

HP: In other counties?

DSM: Yes. It was a good market for seed of these key varieties. The upshot of it was that we put soy



beans in to Vanderburgh County and even down in Union Township where they had never grown anything but corn and timothy; timothy on the hills for the horses, and corn in the bottom lands. They started growing soy beans, because it was a good seed crop and they began to have a good market for it.

HP: What made the soil acid that it required the rotation?

DSM: The gradual wearing out of humus and the lack of replacement of humus seems to develop a kind of toxic acid condition under those conditions and the soil gets tough and hard-packed and the beneficial bacteria don't function well.

HP: And the soy beans did correct that?

DSM: Well, soy beans would grow in that kind of soil where clover wouldn't.

HP: Would it also do anything to rehabilitate the soil?

DSM: Well sure, if they turned them under for humus replacement it helped a great deal to rehabilitate the soil.

The upshot of it was that two or three years after I left there, I went back to Purdue and was talking to Keller Beeson, who was at that time the extension Agronomist. Keller had just been down into the "Pocket" of which Vanderburgh County is a part, and he said "I think you ought to be very proud of the fact that southern Indiana and the "Pocket" today is one of the outstanding soy bean production regions in the United States." Of course, at that time they were beginning to spread out into the Illinois blacklands and other areas, I said "Yes, I am proud of that fact." So this was the major new crop that we introduced.

Of course, at the same time we were doing this, we were recommending the use of ground limestone to get the soil back into shape where they could grow clover; particularly for the dairymen and others who needed hay and fodder of that type for their cattle.



- HP: The limestone, what does it do? Sweetens?
- DSM: Limestone sweetens the soil. It developed an alkaline reaction which helps to sweeten the soil so that the bacteria can develop so that clover and other legumes can store nitrogen and do the job that they are supposed to do.
- HP: Is that part of the country still growing essentially what it was growing fifty years ago?
- DSM: I haven't been back to Vanderburgh County to check on their crop production during the last twenty-five years or more. I'm pretty sure that they are still growing corn down in the bottom lands and probably soy beans. Not quite the way they used to do but I'm certain they are still producing corn and beans for the market.

Part of Vanderburgh County that used to be good farming land is now under houses. The city of Evansville has spread out and is taking up a lot of territory. The suburban area has developed out into the county, yet there still is quite a lot of farmland. They are undoubtedly growing hybrid corn nowadays on the farms still in operation in Vanderburgh County.

### Hybrid Corn

- HP: When was hybrid corn introduced?
- DSM: Hybrid corn actually got under way along in the 1920's but there weren't enough seed producers producing hybrid corn. It wasn't widely used until after 1930.
- HP: What are the advantages of hybrid corn?
- DSM: Hybrid corn is uniform. You can look at a field of hybrid corn and know that it is hybrid because it looks like you could put a level on the top of it





when it is growing. When it tassels out, it is just as level as it can be.

HP: Every seed grows at the same rate of speed? Is that it?

DSM: That's right. Each seed has the same genes, exactly. Also, it is possible to select, from their pure line, types that have a stiff stalk and do not fall over in wind storms. The big factor, in addition to that, is that it is higher producing. Hybrids for some reason or other--true in livestock generally speaking as well as in crops of corn--are more productive than the mixed genes of a normal crop that is selected out of a field. Do you know how hybrid corn is produced? Let me tell you briefly about it for it will give you a better understanding.

In order to produce hybrid corn specialists take a certain type seed corn; they will grow it for several years, maybe for four or five years; self-pollinate it and prevent any cross pollination at all, until they get what they call a pure line. Very often a pure line in a corn crop, when they actually get a pure line, may not be taller than two or three feet. It's a little bit of a stunted plant with stunted ears. Then they pick that particular pure line and cross it with another pure line. They don't allow cross pollination excepting with the two pure lines which produces a hybrid. The resulting hybrid seed produces a vigorous and beautiful crop.

HP: Maybe one is selected for rigid stem.

DSM: That's right. They try various combinations and then they pick the ones that are best adapted to the area.

The way they cross pollinate these pure lines, after they get to the place where they want to cross them and develop a hybrid seed, is that they have boys go through and detassel one of them. The tassel carries the pollen, the seed, the male part of it. They detassel one type maybe every two or three rows where they planted that type of seed, and leave the other type to supply the pollen so that the whole field will be pollinated by exactly the same pollen, and you've got your hybrid.



They detassel one pure line so it won't pollinate its own and the other type will provide the pollen. Then that seed is the hybrid seed and may be planted just one year. It is necessary to buy new seed again the next year.

HP: Why?

DSM: Because it begins to split up and divide up into various types.

HP: It goes back to its origins.

DSM: That's right. It's a throw back. You can grow corn from it but you aren't sure you're going to get the kind of uniformity that you are looking for from a hybrid.

HP: You can't use it as seed corn.

DSM: That's right. You don't use it. You can but you don't.

HP: That's interesting. I'm trying to apply it to human beings. Whether the birth rate of a very inbred community finally goes down, as corn; doesn't produce as much. I don't know.

DSM: We haven't carried this question of pure lines and hybrids in humans very far. We do know that there has been an understanding on the part of people throughout the years, that people who are closely related should not marry because very often they produce cripples or various kinds of deformity. The reason for this is, for anybody who knows anything about genetics, quite obvious. If there are any weaknesses at all, in the genes of the strain, you intensify them and it begins to pop out with all kinds of problems. Now if you have all strengths and no weaknesses then you get a strong line.

One of the ways they have improved certain breeds of livestock, throughout the years, is by what they call inbreeding. Breeding a cow to her son, for example, if he is a good bull; and the same



way with hogs, and other animals. And yet you can carry that to the place where you begin to get a reduction in vigor. In human beings, I'm sure, that if you have had an incestuous situation inbreeding, you would be likely to get reduction in virility and in stamina as in livestock.

### Wintertime Meeting In Scott Township

DSM: We had a very interesting wintertime program that was worked out in Scott township. This was one of my best communities. We started having meetings there about once a month, and when it came the fall of the year somebody suggested that we schedule meetings on one particular day a month.

We would meet about nine o'clock in the morning and have lunch at the church. The ladies would bring enough to lay out a wonderful lunch. And then we carried on till about four o'clock until it was time to go home to do the milking and other chores.

HP: Did the wives take part in these meetings?

DSM: Yes. The wives also took part in these meetings because they wanted to come and they wanted somebody to meet with them who knew something about Home Economics. So among the various people that I learned about in Evansville, who were willing to spend some time on it, I found four or five people who were willing to help and who were well trained enough to do it and I would take them out there with me.

HP: You mean in Home Ec?

DSM: In Home Economics, or somebody who had developed certain interests in such things as sewing or table setting and in all kinds of things that the ladies





were interested in. Some were people who were teaching Home Economics in the Evansville schools.

HP: But there was no program for the women's phase of farming at that time.

DSM: There was no Home Demonstration Agent at that time but shortly after I left the county they got a Home Demonstration Agent.

There was some Girl's Club work, 4H Club work including canning and sewing clubs. These for the most part were supervised by school teachers who were busy during the winter teaching school but had some time during the summer. We found enough money to pay them a small stipend for their expenses, and their time in handling the supervision of clubs.

Going back to Scott township. What we did out there with the men and with the women was quite interesting to me. They were looking to me, of course, to provide the program and I said "No. I'm not going to do that. You people are going to participate in this program" and I said "What kind of subjects do you want to talk about?" Somebody said "Well, we would like to know something about seed corn and seed corn selection."

I said "All right. The first meeting, then, I want each of you to bring five or ten ears, I don't care whether it is five ears or ten ears, of the kind of seed corn you would select to plant. Then I will expect you to defend your position to the other people." Well they came and they started to talk about seed corn and of course after a while if they asked my opinion about this, I would take out a set of ears that I thought was the type that was adapted to that area and explained the reasons for my choice. But they went on from there and they talked about all kinds of corn problems; planting, time of planting; cultivation; insect and disease control; and all that sort of thing. And we would spend the whole day. It was amazing.

Toward spring, I remember, one of the young Dutchmen of the group, Chris Volkman--a good farmer--said "Let's talk about potatoes the next time." This was along about February. I said "All right. Each of





you bring a half dozen or a dozen potatoes to the next meeting." They didn't know what I was going to do when they brought them. But when they got settled I said "Chris, how do you cut potatoes for planting?" They cut potatoes by dividing them into pieces having an eye in each piece, at least one eye. Chris dug for his knife and he started in to cut potatoes and he didn't get through with the first potato before they all began to dig for their knives. And they had the darndest argument about how to cut potatoes. I just sat back, of course, and listened and watched.

HP: The fact that you don't just use the eye--is the other part that you cut for the potato is that for nutriment?

DSM: That's right.

The part of the potato other than the eye provides nutriment until the plant gets rooted and established. This is what supplies nutriment to the young plant and if you dig up the old potatoes you will find nothing much left but the peeling or the husk. It has all been utilized and dried up, rotted out because the young plant has taken the moisture along with the nutriments out of it.

Well, this was the start. Of course I kept leading them on. "What time do you plant potatoes, Chris?" Then they would argue about the time to plant and again control of potato bugs, control of diseases.

HP: Would they come to a consensus?

DSM: Yes. They were usually able to agree. Once in a while you would find something, such as their method of cutting potatoes, which may be somewhat different, but of course they wouldn't change. But at least they had a good time arguing about it.

So we went on. We had a whole meeting on potatoes. I learned as much about potatoes as they did, because I didn't know too much. I had planted potatoes and I had grown potatoes as a kid. That's the way we made our first real money, my brother and I as I have told you. But the meeting was fun.



At one of these meetings they wanted to talk about dairy rations and how to balance rations. I wasn't very good on this. It had been a long time since I figured balanced rations.

HP: What did you do when you needed some help? Did you go to Lafayette?

DSM: Of course I had reference books for this kind of thing. And I boned up and I thought I could do it but I got stuck. Well, there was one young chap in the bunch, John Whitehead, who had been to Purdue for a short course and he knew all there was to know about balancing a ration by the method that I was trying to use. So he started making suggestions and I said "John, come take this piece of chalk and you go ahead with this." He went ahead with it and I sat back and just grinned like a Cheshire cat and they looked at me and said "Is he doing it all right?", and I said "He's doing fine. He's doing just as well as I could do it." I didn't have to disclose my ignorance. But they had a wonderful day talking about dairy production, dairy feeding, and the kinds of feeds that were available.

HP: These meetings would go on just in wintertime?

DSM: Just in wintertime.

### Summer Time Meetings

DSM: They had meetings usually in the summertime too but they usually were evening meetings.

I remember one meeting we had right in the midst of threshing time. Somebody from Purdue, I think Fred Shanklin who was one of the club supervisors at Purdue, recommended that I get a chap by the name of Doc Frier to come down and show a set of slides. He said "He has a wonderful set of slides that will interest these people."



So I scheduled him for right in the middle of threshing and they said "We'll be threshing and we're going to be busy and I don't know whether we can get there or not." I said, "All right, I'll make you a deal. I'll come out and help you thresh that day if you will come to the meeting." They said "All right." Of course they had a gleam in their eye.

So I put on my coveralls, went out, took a team and a wagon and threshed for four or five hours. They tried to cover me up and used every trick possible on me and got the biggest bang out of it. I had done this sort of thing at home and I knew how to do it and I could load a load of wheat as well as any of them. So I worked like Hell all afternoon.

HP: Then went back and held the meeting?

DSM: That's right. Then we got cleaned up and went to the meeting and most of them went to sleep! This was the most god-awful, boring session that I had ever sat in on. I was ashamed of it afterwards. But the technique that we used in getting that meeting was one of the things that interested me. It interested them. They enjoyed it even though they all got sleepy before the meeting was over.

HP: I'll bet. They had probably gotten up at dawn.

DSM: Sure.

#### A Return Visit After Twenty Years

DSM: It was in that community that they held a banquet celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of extension work and the first anniversary of the organization of the first Soil Conservation District in Indiana. They invited me back as the main speaker, and we held the banquet in the same community house at the church.



Bluegrass Church, they called it, and people at that time came from all over the county. I had boned up a week or two ahead of time and listed all these people down the various roads and I only missed two of them as they came up to say hello. I'd look over somebody's shoulder and recall the names as they approached. This was a lot of fun.

HP: How can you do this? People really change so much in twenty-five years. I can't imagine how you could--

DSM: Well, it had been about twenty years since I had seen any of them, but it was no problem with me once I got the names listed. Of course, I knew most of these people so well because they were old buddies or they wouldn't be coming to this banquet. Some of the younger ones did look older and some of the oldsters also looked older, of course. But they would come up with a boyish grin on and they all looked a little younger than they actually were.

### Women On The Farm

DSM: There were some women farmers in those days. The chap who was one of the main lawyers in Evansville, who had been born and brought up on a farm out in the northern part of the county, had some sisters who lived on the farm. He lived in town and went out there occasionally but his sisters ran the farm. They probably were my best customers when it came to questions.

They were interested in asking questions about anything that came to their mind that they were not sure about. I think they were a pair of "old maids," as I remember it. One of them was a teacher and she was quite interested in lots of things. This is the only farm that I can think of that was operated entirely by women.





But I learned one thing, among many other things, while I was there. I came to this conclusion: that the boss in farm families, and I'm sure it is true in other families, just about fifty percent of the time was the woman.

HP: In making decisions on how money was to be spent?

DSM: In making all kinds of decisions that dealt particularly with the budget the women often made the decision. I learned this when I was trying to organize a Dairy Herd Improvement Association. In those days it was called Cow Testing Association. I thought they needed one, so I went out to sign up people. It required twenty-six members because there were twenty-six working days in the month. They hired a cow tester to test their milk for butter fat and to keep records of the production one day a month. It cost a bit of money.

HP: To test their milk for butter fat, or what?

DSM: Butter fat and production generally. It was a method of weeding out the herd to determine which were the cows that would produce the most and that were the better breeding stock.

I learned that one of the men in the area had a wonderful herd. It wasn't a pure bred herd but was an excellent grade herd. His brother and others were quite anxious to get him in, but I couldn't convince his wife. But he finally did come in and he was in the top list in the state of Indiana, with two or three high-producing cows, time and time again. Of course they were delighted later. She was the one who was holding the purse strings, and holding out.

HP: What was her resistance? Do you know?

DSM: She was careful about the budget and I just couldn't sell her on the idea that this was an important thing to their business. We finally did, but it took a long long time. Well, I got to thinking about it. Thinking about the people I was dealing with and I came to the realization that on many, many things the lady of the house, if she was a strong character, very often was the boss of the house.



It was true in my family. My Dad was a strong-minded chap and he did things that he wanted to do, but when it came to the business end of things on the farm Mother was in some respects a better business manager than Dad was. He always consulted her. Dad was away so much that she very often was running things.

HP: Did this include the decision as to what crops would be put in?

DSM: Not necessarily that. If new crops were planned or if they are going to change the pattern Mother would be consulted. Just like signing up for a Herd Improvement Association: it was something new and different and they were going to gamble a bit, and the women helped to make the decision.

HP: What sort of questions or information, do you recall, that these two women who ran the farm wanted from you?

DSM: The women farmers mentioned earlier asked questions about time of planting; the kinds of crops they should be growing; and if they were dealing with a new crop with which they hadn't had experience, they were interested in checking at every stage about how to seed, the time of planting, the time of harvesting, and marketing; almost every phase of the crop program.

HP: Did they come in to see you or consult you by the telephone?

DSM: They would usually telephone and ask me if I was out that way to stop by, and I made more farm visits with them, I think, than I had office visits. Their brother came in occasionally to bring a question because he had been out there and said the girls wanted to know so and so. So the next time I was out that way I'd stop by.

HP: Sometimes I think women have reluctance to go to the courthouse. All those hangers-on around there and that sort of thing. They might not have wanted to come to the office in the courthouse.

DSM: I'm sure that these women did chores such as milking and taking care of chickens and gardening and that



type of chores close around the house, but I don't think they drove tractors, or handled the teams in the field. I think that was done by somebody else.

There were women on farms young and old who went out into the fields and helped and in those days they wore the same kind of dresses they would wear around the house when they helped in the fields excepting one young lady I knew who wore jeans and was as good as any man I ever saw about a dairy. Agnes Hoeing was a dairy club girl and she practically handled the milking, the handling of cattle and all of the farm work while her father went to meetings and did a lot of things that he wanted to do.

I had a very interesting experience with her. We ran a special car to Purdue to their short course and had people from three counties.

HP: You mean a railroad car?

DSM: Yes. We chartered a sleeper and took a bunch of club kids. The county agent from Warwick County brought some older farmers and their sons, the same in Posey County so we made up a full car load. The only girl in the Pullman was this young lady that I mentioned above. These boys were not worrying too much about what they said and they horsed around after they got into the berths. We had a terrible time keeping them calmed down and remembering that there was a girl on the car. It worried some of the other agents more than it did me. I'm sure that Agnes had heard enough of this sort of thing so that I don't think it bothered her. She came out bright and pert the next morning.

HP: Do you happen to know whether she married a farmer?

DSM: No. I don't know what became of her. She was a husky young German girl and she probably married a farmer but I don't know.

I don't actually remember any women in Vanderburgh County who were farmers in the sense of doing their own farm work. I have seen this happen in some other places but I never saw it down there.





### Four H Club Work

HP: I would like to know about the 4H work; how new it was when you were doing it; whether you had responsibility for that along with other things, and all about it.

DSM: Four H Club work was one of my most rewarding projects. It was completely new to Vanderburgh County. They had none before I came there. They had very little Four H Club work in any of the counties until after they got a county agent. Four H Club work was one of the earlier types of extension work.

There were men in two or three different states who claimed that they started Four H Club work. One was a extension director by the name of Graham in Ohio. He was teaching in Springfield, Ohio, and had started home projects of the type that were later included in Four H work. A chap by the name of Benson out in Ames, Iowa, started corn clubs, and then George Farrel in Massachusetts claimed to be the pioneer. All of these happened to come along about the same time, about 1905 to 1908.

The Smith-Lever Act was passed in 1914. They had county agents before that but they were financed partly by Sears Roebuck or some other big institution and the local county. After the Smith-Lever Act was passed federal appropriations were available to the states based upon the rural population. These federal funds had to be matched by state appropriations and county funds. The counties usually provided office expenses but seldom put up money for salaries; although some of them did. It was only after the Smith-Lever Act was passed that Four H Club work began to spread out across the United States.

HP: How did you tackle it? It's certainly a different phase because of working with youngsters.

DSM: There was a club department in the extension service with three or four specialists.

HP: You mean at Purdue.





DSM: At Purdue. They were specialists in this field. I talked with them before I went onto the job. Then, as I remember it, Fred Shanklin who was one of the members of the staff, came down and spent several days with me going over the possibilities and meeting with some people who were prospective leaders.

HP: Did you work through the schools?

DSM: Yes, in part. We began to write up the possibilities in the papers. I had some individual club members that I supervised personally scattered here and there over the county who weren't really in clubs at all. They were doing home projects which I supervised. We had some clubs which were supervised by one of the teachers in the school in that area.

In Perry Township, for example, we had a chap by the name of Ed Grossman who had a number of club youngsters in three or four different types of projects--youngsters who had poultry projects and members who had pigs as their home project, and we even had some girls in a canning club. We usually got some help from one of the county girls in helping in the meetings.

HP: How did you get kids interested in this?

DSM: We aroused interest through the schools, through the parents and through the teachers. I would go out and talk with them in the schools.

HP: Was it put to them as a source of possible spending money or what would motivate them to raise chickens or a pig?

DSM: Well, I don't remember that we used the profit motive much. We presented it as an interesting program in which they had an opportunity to learn something and to have a project of their own, with some prospect of getting some income out of it although that wasn't true with the sewing and canning clubs for the girls. Mothers encouraged them to do this sort of thing because they were interested in having the youngsters learn.



With the boys the prospect of having pigs and the opportunity of at least winning prizes and to have poultry to sell or to have a dairy calf that grew up into a cow that they would own was important. This work was interesting. I had some boys in pig club projects and three or four who had a corn project. They had an acre or more of corn of their own that they handled, supervised, planted and carried all the way through including harvesting.

HP: Which phase of your county agent work did you find most interesting?

DSM: I think as time went on I had the most pleasure out of the club work. It was fun watching these youngsters come along and develop. I remember one case, the chap by the name of Homer Pierce who was my first office caller lived way out in the north end of the county and he had a boy by the name of Elmer. Elmer joined a pig club and I visited him regularly. He had three pigs as his project.

HP: What would you visit him for?

DSM: Oh, I visited him to see how he was getting along, whether he was having any problems in the way of parasites or other things that ought to be taken care of such as lice; whether or not he was maintaining a good ration; whether the pigs were growing well and to give him encouragement, and a pat on the back. This kid came along very nicely, and I remember quite clearly after he had gone through a year and had sold his pigs I dropped by there to see his father, and he disappeared when we were out in the barnyard for just a very short time and the first thing I knew I heard a bicycle bell ring and I looked around and here came Elmer on a bicycle. He had bought it with his pig club money. You never saw a kid prouder of anything in his life than he was of that bicycle. It was his own, he had spent his own money for it and he was just as proud as punch.

HP: How old was that boy?

DSM: I think he was about eleven or twelve years old.



HP: They were very young kids.

DSM: Yes. Most of the club members were young. Two or three were in their teens, fourteen or fifteen. Most of them were anywhere from eight years to twelve years of age.

### Interesting Adult Demonstrations

DSM: I got a great deal of satisfaction out of seeing the results of the demonstration programs we had with such things as soy beans, limestone, fertilizers and others. We had demonstrations here and there with people who would leave strips not limed, and we would call meetings and show the neighbors what was happening.

I got a great deal of satisfaction also out of the hog cholera control program that we put into effect that I will discuss later.

We had one demonstration that turned out to be the sort of thing that you look back on with great pleasure. One day a chap by the name of Haas, a German, who was a school teacher out in German township--I think there was only one or two families with English names in the whole township--came in wearing a derby hat that had turned green, and the rest of his get up was of the same vintage. He said "I've got a brother-in-law who wants to grow alfalfa. I wish you would come by and see him. He lives just above me." I said "What kind of land does he have?" He said "Well, I don't think it's too good but I wish you would go out and talk to him." So we talked awhile and I said "All right, I'll stop by and see him."

This brother-in-law's name was Cornelius Roeder. He was a widower and he had eight youngsters; some of the girls were teenage but most of them were younger. I stopped by to see him and he took me over and showed me a little five acre patch that was on a hillside,



not too steep, but there it was. Clay soil that needed about everything. I looked it all over and I said "Well, I think I can get alfalfa for you if you will do everything I tell you to do." He said "I will." So I said "Do you have any stable manure?" "Yes", he said "I have some." I said "I want a good coating of stable manure, most of it to go on before you plow and then a top dressing after you plow before you seed. I want you to inoculate the seed before you plant because there hasn't been any alfalfa in here before but I'll see that you get the inoculations. That's no problem."

HP: I don't understand inoculation.

DSM: Inoculation was necessary to provide the growth of bacteria that would develop the nodules on the roots of the alfalfa plant which is the nitrogen-fixing mechanism of all legumes.

HP: An injection?

DSM: Well what you did was to take this little batch of inoculants that you had made up in the laboratories from alfalfa roots. This is put with water and sprinkled over the seed so that it is covered with enough of it so that when it is planted it had been inoculated with bacteria enough to assure the development of the nitrogen fixing nodules on the roots.

HP: And the plant seed absorbed this? Did you have to puncture each seed?

DSM: No, no. It didn't have to absorb it. It carries the bacteria into the soil with the seed. It was there when the roots were ready to pick it up. Once alfalfa had been grown and gotten inoculation started in the soil there was no problem.

So I said "I will get that for you but you will need the lime." He said "All right. Where do I get the limestone?" I told him and how much to put on. I said "I want you to put on at least a ton per acre and two tons would be better. Then you should apply two hundred pounds of acid phosphate fertilizer per acre which would mean half a ton for the five acres. It would be better if you put on three hundred or





four hundred pounds, since you haven't been fertilizing." He said "All right. You tell me how much." I said "Well lets make it three hundred pounds." So he did. He used his manure, he did exactly what I told him to do. He planted it in August as I recommended.

HP: In August?

DSM: It was well started before fall then it came on well the next spring. I said "One other thing I wish you would put in a little strip or two of sweet clover which will be a good preparatory crop for alfalfa later because the roots are thick and though they are not as deep as alfalfa they are big and they help to open up the soil and prepare the ground for alfalfa."

HP: Put it right along side of the alfalfa?

DSM: Right along side. I got him to leave a strip up at the top without any lime or fertilizer. It was just a drill row through.

HP: Just the soil as it was?

DSM: That's right. Then the rest of it was planted to alfalfa and then on the lower part of the patch he put in three or four drill widths of sweet clover. Well, he did everything I told him to do and he did it just right. He got a beautiful crop of alfalfa and the sweet clover was all right too. He wasn't so much interested in that. So the upshot was that I was a great man in his eyes and in the eyes of the kids and from that time on everytime I stopped there I was referred to as the "alfalfa man." Nothing else.

Cornelius Roeder had a cave and in it he had five barrels of wine. Everytime I stopped after he got the alfalfa established to visit with him he would say before I left "Now we will go and have a drink on the alfalfa." We went through the same process on each visit. I nearly didn't get home the first time this happened because he would take a common tumbler, the kind used in those days, and say "And now we'll taste each one and then we'll drink the one you like best." And he would fill that tumbler up about two-thirds full for a taste and I would have to drink five of



those "tastes" and then have a full tumbler for a drink. Well, I began to get smart after the first time. The first time I didn't leave immediately and by the time I got home I was really floating. So from that time on I never stopped there unless I was on my way home and I didn't linger after I had had my drinks. I went right on home and parked the car. This went on every time. He would have been mad if I hadn't joined him in the cave so we did it. Anyhow he was a great demonstrator and of course, people from all over the township knew about Cornelius Roeder and his alfalfa.

He had another brother-in-law by the name of Hahn who wanted to grow soy beans. This was the way things spread. So I helped him get his soy beans, told him about inoculations for soy bean seed because they had never grown them in that area and made other suggestions. He got a wonderful crop of soy beans. We had a meeting on his place to show off his soy beans. He was a proud man.

This was the sort of thing that cracked the community wide open in the kind of areas where these old German folks lived who were so conservative. They loosened up and the new county agent was accepted.

HP: Did you keep notes and did you make reports to anyone on this?

DSM: We had to make monthly reports on our activities including these demonstrations and then we had an annual report every year. I have been tempted to go down to the National Archives here in Washington to see if they have the county agent reports of Vanderburgh County on microfilm after fifty years. It would be interesting to find out.

#### Armstrong Township And Henry Kissel's Hog Cholera

DSM: The various communities in Vanderburgh County had their own particular characteristics. Some of them were



a little bit hard to get opened up, so as to gain the confidence of people in the community. One of those was Armstrong township. For the most part the first meetings we held in each one of the communities was arranged by the township trustee who was a member of the county board of education, which had had the responsibility of approving my appointment to the job as county agent. The township trustee in Armstrong township was a chap by the name of Joe Martin. He was rather slow and he told me on a number of occasions that he wasn't sure that people would come out to a meeting even if he called them. He said "We don't have any very good meeting place." Finally after some urging he arranged a meeting in an old warehouse which was right close to the railroad that ran through that area and next door to the general store and the saloon which was the most important social center in the community.

We arranged to have this meeting in the early fall. It was chilly. I think it was probably as near a flop as any meeting could be. After the meeting was over one of the men came up to me and he said "You know Mr. Myer if we met over in the saloon we would be a lot warmer. There would be a lot more people who would be interested in coming." I said "All right. The next time we have a meeting we will have it in the saloon."

But before the next meeting came around one of the deputy sheriffs by the name of Jake Slager came by my door one morning, stepped just inside, and he said "Myer, I was out in Armstrong township yesterday and I ran into Henry Kissel and he said he wanted to see you. He's having trouble with his hogs. He's got some sick hogs." I said "Jake you know darn well that Henry Kissel didn't ask for me. He doesn't know me from Adam. I'm sure he's never heard of me." Jake said "Oh yes he has. You go out there; he needs you." So I said "All right, I'll go out but I don't think he sent for me." Well, the next day a young chap who occasionally hung around the office and liked to ride out into the country with me and I went out to see Henry Kissel.

When we got there, here was this elderly German, aged around sixty or sixty-five, with the kind of





paunch you would expect a good old German to have. He was so hard of hearing you had to yell at the top of your voice to get him to understand what you were saying and I was sure that when I introduced myself and told him I had come to look at his hogs that he was skeptical. He kept eyeing me and looking me over when he thought I wasn't looking. So we went out and looked the hogs over and sure enough they had hog cholera. There wasn't much question in my mind about it. He had five hogs that were down and about to die. He had three or four more that were a little dopey but hadn't gone down yet but most of them out of the forty that he had were still on their feet and looking good. They were ready for market.

So after I looked them all over I said "Now what you need is a veterinarian, you don't need me, and you ought to get either Dr. McConnell, or one of the veterinarians out of Evansville to come out and vaccinate your hogs." I went over this I suppose six or eight times during the hour or hour and a half I was there to be sure that he understood and to drive home the necessity for vaccination. I told him that even though he got a veterinarian he would undoubtedly lose the five hogs that were down and quite ill and that he might lose the three or four others that were not down but ill. Possibly Dr. McConnell might decide to vaccinate the three or four ill ones and he might save them.

After we had gone over and over this we got into the car and started back to town. When we got down the road a little piece this young lad who was riding with me said "Do you think he will do it?" I said "I have no idea but I just hope he will." Well, I didn't see Henry Kissel again or didn't hear from him until our second meeting in Armstrong township.

We had our meeting in the saloon and we were standing there talking. Four or five people had gathered around me and were asking questions and all at once I saw somebody coming through this group knocking people to the right and to the left with his elbows and right up to me.

It was Henry Kissel. He slapped me on the back and almost knocked me on my face and said "Young man,





after you left I didn't think a damn thing about what you told me. I didn't think I was going to do anything about it. That evening I was sitting there reading the paper and I thought by Gott I'll do it. I told the boy to hitch up the horse that we were going over to Cynthiana and get Doc McConnell. And we did. We drove to Cynthiana and we saw Dr. McConnell, and he came over the next day. He looked them hogs over and he said the same damn thing you said. He said I would lose some of them and I might lose three or four more but he could save the rest of them if we vaccinated them. So I said 'Go ahead'; so he vaccinated them hogs. Those that you said would live are still alive and well and by Gott, young man, if these other hogs live I never will forget you."

Well, this was the biggest thing that happened in Armstrong township to gain the confidence of the farmers who were at that meeting and of the community because Henry Kissel was a good old standby. He had a good farm and he was a good farmer in the eyes of those who were his neighbors and he was my man from then on.

I might add that Henry Kissel never had a sick cow, or a sick horse, or a sick animal of any kind after that that he didn't call me up and ask me to come out. I would say "Henry, there isn't any use my coming out. You call Doc McConnell. He's the man who knows about sick animals." "No," he'd say "I want you to come out and look at them. Then if you want me to get Doc McConnell I'll get him." So I would drive out that way and I would look over his cow or his horse or his animals and say "I think you better call Doc McConnell." He would say "All right." So he would call Doc McConnell without further argument.

I would like to go back just a little bit to give a little background on hog cholera. Hog cholera was quite prevalent in those days. It was the early days in the use of hog cholera serum for prevention of cholera and many of the veterinarians had had no experience in handling it.

The extension staff at Purdue had among its members a Doctor Kigan who was a veterinarian and



who had developed a technique for dealing with the hog cholera problem. He told me about it before I went onto the job in Evansville. So one of the first things we did was to arrange for him to come down and I called a meeting of the veterinarians in the county and in the surrounding area. Only five or six of them came. Some of them were not interested but one of them was Dr. McConnell, whom I have mentioned, who lived in Cynthiana, Posey County, but did some of his practice over in Vanderburgh County. Another one was one of the good veterinarians in Evansville and these two gentlemen agreed that they would do what we requested.

What we had requested was this: that if they were called out because of hog cholera they would report it to me so I could report it in the papers to warn people to vaccinate their hogs in that community and to take care that they didn't have it carried over to them from a neighbor. In the meantime I would keep a list of the veterinarians who agreed to do this and when somebody asked me whom to get I would give them the names I had of the veterinarians who were cooperating. Two gentlemen said they would cooperate, and we cleaned up hog cholera all over Vanderburgh County as a result of this technique. Henry Kissel was one of our key demonstrators, of course.

#### Army Worm And Grasshopper Control

DSM: One of my most interesting experiences had to do with a call for some help on controlling army worms. Union township was the one bottom land township in the county, where the farmers generally depended entirely on corn as a cash crop because they depended on the flood waters in most of the township to bring the top soil down from up river and deposit it as the flood waters went down. Throughout the years they had been getting pretty good fertilization from the sediment. However, the top soil which was being brought down at



this stage of the game was getting poorer and poorer because the hills had been washed off above and a good deal of it was clay soil and they needed some changes down there.

Right at the upper end of the township was a wonderful family by the name of Edmonds. John Edmonds was one of these very wonderful farmers who had good literature in his home, had a nice family and it was always a joy to go there and have a meal with them which I did a number of times. One day John came into my office and said "What do you know about Army worms?" I said "Why?" He said "We've got them." I said "What are they doing?" He said "Well at the moment they are marching right up through my timothy field and they are taking everything as they go except the stems." I said "I don't know too much about them but I know where I can get the information for you." I had bulletins on insect control which included Army worms. So I informed him that the best thing to do was to make up a bran and arsenate of lead or paris green mixture which was sprinkled over the area to poison them. I gave him the ingredients which included just normal wheat bran, paris green and lemons which were used only for the odor in order to attract the worms. So he bought all these things and took them home. I said "I'll be down tomorrow morning and we will spread it together."

The next morning when we got down to the patch where they had been eating up the timothy crop the day before there wasn't an Army worm in sight. He looked at me and said "Where did they go? They were here yesterday because you could hear them eat." I said "I'm sure you could. I'll show you where they went." I got a sharp stick and began to dig them out of the ground. The time had arrived, just the wrong time for me, for them to go into the pupa stage or the resting stage, and they do this by going into the ground and burying themselves wherever they happen to be at that moment. They go through the cycle there and they come out as moths which fly away someplace else and lay their eggs during the following season.

When John Edmonds realized what had happened and I explained the life cycle to him and just how





this all happened he just nearly rolled on the ground. He laughed and he yelled and he whooped and he said "Young man, you have missed the opportunity of a lifetime. If you had come down yesterday and we had gotten this poison spread, I would have thought that a minor miracle had happened and I would have spread it all over this township. You would have had no more troubles because they would have thought you were a miracle man." So I said "All right. You know the answer now and you can spread the story around if you want to but there will probably be other opportunities."

The worms march in a row and they go right down the line. The line through the timothy field was as clear cut as it could be. They went right across the whole field, the whole big swath of them feeding as they went.

Several months later a new opportunity came to show our skill in insect control in Union township. I had a telephone call from a chap by the name of Sam Bell who felt that they had no use for a county agent up to this time but he called me up and said "We're in trouble." I said "What's the matter?" He said "The grasshoppers are about to eat us up." I said "Did you have any trouble last year?" He said "Yes, they got about half of my crop last year." I said "Why didn't you let me know?" He said "Well, I didn't think you knew a damn thing about it." He was that frank about it. I said "All right. I think I can help you." So I went down and we used the same kind of poison bait for grasshoppers as we had planned to use for the Army worms. I told him what to get and I would come down and we would mix it and spread it. Which we did. The grasshoppers were just little fellows. They were just hatching out and they were thousands or probably millions of them. It was rather dry, hot weather. The corn was probably two feet high when we scattered the bait and they ate it. I went down a day or two later and found them piled up in the shady places dead and black as they could be or they were dying and blowing into the cracks in the field where the soil had dried out and had cracked open.





So I said "Are you happy?" and he said "Yes. I think we have found the answer." I said "Can we get these other fellows around here to come to a meeting?" He said "No I don't think so. They are cultivating corn. I don't think they would stop." I said "Well, what about Sunday? What do they do on Sunday?" He said "Yes. They might come on Sunday." I said "All right. Let's call a meeting for about two o'clock next Sunday afternoon and we will put out some more bait in the meantime. We'll see if we can't demonstrate to them how to control grasshoppers." This was late in the week anyhow. So we got the word out.

On Sunday afternoon I went down with my sailor straw hat and my bow tie. It was too hot to wear a coat. I sat down and backed up against one of his porch posts with my pipe and just waited. There was quite a crew that had gathered around the yard in little groups. We waited and waited and finally somebody yelled out, "Well, what about these grasshoppers?" Sam said "Do you want to see them?" They said "Yes." He said "All right. Get into your cars." So we got into the cars and we went back to the fields where we had spread the bait. We couldn't find any grasshoppers at first because they had all gone into some spots that were full of bind weeds where there was plenty of shade and had died. Some of them piled up there a foot deep. When I led them into that area they were sold. They knew something had happened to those grasshoppers. So we talked about them and what we had done about it.

We went back to Sam's house and yard. I got out of the car and went over and sat down and lighted my pipe again and waited. Only half of the people had gone down to see what had happened. The rest of them were skeptical and didn't even go. Finally one of the old boys who didn't go said "Tell us about those grasshoppers. What did you find down there?" One of the men who did go said "Well, we found them all right. You never saw so many dead grasshoppers in your life."

This other chap said "Tell us what you did about it." So Sam said "Well, this is Mr. Myer the county agent and I think most of you know him. He is the man that gave us the information so Mr. Myer you tell them about it." So I got up and told about what we



had done and why we had done it and what had happened. As a result a lot of them did what we had recommended. They saved their crops. Some of them who didn't spread poison bait lost about half of their crop. In any case we had gained the confidence of a large number of people in that township and from there on we had no trouble. We could go in there without being kidded every time we went down as we had been originally.

They used to tell me when I first went down into that community "You better go up into the hills where they need you. We don't need you down here." But that was all past and that township, by the way, became one of the major soy bean growing townships and communities in all of Indiana after they got started with soy beans because they realized that they needed some change, and that their soil wasn't as good as it had been once. They realized their deposit from the floods wasn't as good as it used to be. So they began to grow soy beans and to market them as well as corn.

### The Process Of Change

DSM: I don't think there is a great deal of difference in human nature generally in their ability to resist change. I think there is something to the fact that the more isolated communities who haven't had much contact with the outside world are more wary and more careful about taking in strangers. You really have to show them something that they can visualize in order to get them to adopt new practices. But I think this would be true in any area where they hadn't learned to communicate nor learned to go to the source of information for themselves.

One of the great values, of course, of the Agricultural Extension work was that it was based on the demonstration idea rather than just going out and



talking to people. There were two types of demonstrations. One of them was the so-called method demonstration. How to do things. How to make bran bait, for example, or how to can fruit, etc., etc.

The other one was a demonstration as to how to grow things, how to produce, how to fertilize and so on which was a long time process. You had to wait for results but in time results did show up and then you called a meeting to show them what the farmer had done and why he had done it and what results he had gotten. I don't think there is a great deal of difference in human nature. It would depend more on their environment and their traditions than anything else.



## CHAPTER VI

COUNTY AGENT SUPERVISOR AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY AND  
A MOVE TO OHIO AS A COUNTY AGENT AGAIN

DSM: I stated earlier that I moved to Evansville March 1, 1916 at the behest of Thomas Coleman, County Agent Leader in Indiana whose office was at Purdue. At the time I took on the job I asked him what I should do and he said "Go down there and go to work, you know as much about the job as we do." So I did just that. After one year I received a raise of two hundred dollars a year from \$1600 to \$1800 which was a very important item in my young life.

During my first month on the job a promoter by the name of John Wallenmyer who served as the sealer of weights and measures in Vanderburgh County promoted or was putting on a farmer's institute at Evansville and I was asked to help with the program. As a consequence I contributed two speeches during the institute on agronomic subjects. I was well versed in agronomy at the time because I had just come from Lexington, Kentucky, where I had taught agronomy for two years at the University of Kentucky. It so happened that Professor G. I. Christy who was Director of the Agricultural Extension Service at Purdue was present when I made my speeches and evidently he was impressed because sometime within the year after I had been on the job he called me into Purdue in the spring of 1917 and urged me to accept the position of Field Crop Specialist on the Purdue staff. He put the pressure on rather heavily for a couple of days during my visit to Purdue.

I finally told him before I returned to Evansville, that I would have to talk to some of my local leaders and others who had supported my work there and to think over the matter and I would let him know within a few days. I did talk with some of my supporters in the county and after talking with them





I came to the realization that I didn't want to leave county agent work at that time and furthermore they didn't want me to leave which of course was gratifying.

In the meantime war was imminent. I wrote Professor Christy and turned the job down with the full realization that I might never get another offer from him. But much to my surprise in the fall of 1917, about six months later, I received another offer. This was a job as Assistant County Agent Leader at Purdue working with Thomas Coleman who had hired me in the first instance. I was reluctant to take this new position for two reasons. I was thoroughly enjoying my county agent work and furthermore World War I had been in progress for some time when this offer came and I felt that I should join the Army if I made a change of any kind. I told Professor Christy and Thomas Coleman just this.

Much to my surprise I learned that they without saying anything to me had proceeded to get me reclassified in a 3A classification, which meant that I was in a deferred classification. I was told that emergency agents were to be recruited and placed in all of the counties which did not have agents at that time and that the campaign to produce more food and save food for the war effort was to go into high gear and that my experience and ability was more important to the government in the job proposed than service in the Army. So I reluctantly accepted with the understanding that I could leave for Army service as soon as the emergency extension program for new agents was well established.

In addition to the job of hiring and training and supervising of new emergency county agents, I was put in charge of the increased wheat production campaign to secure a twenty percent increase in planting and production in Indiana. We gained our goal in the wheat production program during the few months of 1917 and 1918 that I was in charge.

During the first ten months of 1918 I found myself in quite an embarrassing situation, because



I was not in uniform. I was in travel status most of the time. I traveled from one weekend to the next and on three or four different occasions I returned to Purdue, even though my schedule didn't call for my returning, to tell Director Christy that I wanted to resign and to go into the Army. Each time he explained how much more important my work was than serving in the ranks. Each time he urged that I stay on until the first set of objectives were accomplished. This went on until signing of the armistice of November 11, 1918. Nevertheless, every time I saw a troop train full of men in uniform heading east and I was still in civies I felt that I was a bit of a slacker. Much to my surprise however, I was never accosted with such a charge during World War I or since.

I worked at the Assistant County Agent Leader job from September 1917 to May 1, 1920. During this period, I traveled into and did work in all but six of the ninety-two counties of Indiana which meant that I had worked in eighty-six different counties during this fairly short period of time. I was training and supervising new county agents, meeting with boards of education, and with state war boards, making speeches, securing county appropriations, running the wartime wheat production campaign, and taking care of all the miscellaneous side issues that came up in connection with these responsibilities.

This wide variety of duties and experiences provided the opportunity to learn much about the job of hiring and supervising men, and the art of speech making and of course added to my knowledge of human nature, good, bad and indifferent.

I have already indicated that during most of the war period I traveled from the first of the week to the weekend. I was in the office on Saturday, on occasion, and then started out again Sunday evening or early Monday morning. In those days we were traveling on local trains. We had sleeper service only from Indianapolis to Evansville. The rest of the time you got in late in the evening, got up early to catch maybe a five o'clock train to another county seat. I get tired even yet when I think about how



tired I was at times. Those long hours, lack of sleep with the grinding work during this period was something that was required and something that we didn't think too much about at that time.

We had of course a variety of type of people doing emergency work. Some of them were older agents who had not done too well earlier were rehired. I remember one case where one of the other supervisors visited a chap of this type and when he got back to the office our supervisor, Tom Coleman, asked him how "Mac" was getting along and he said "Well, he's so busy telling you how busy he is he doesn't have time to do anything." We had one or two cases of this type. Mostly we had younger men shortly out of college who were eager, willing, and who on the whole were intelligent. They were doing a very good job.

There were a couple of older agents who were recalcitrant and who did not fit well into the situation. One of these was a chap who was known as Stephen Jim Craig who was county agent in Lake County, Indiana. He had graduated from the University of Illinois and he had an offer to return to Illinois and they had written to the County Agent Leader to ask his opinion about Craig's services and abilities. We all knew that he was the type of person who did not work well in double harness. He didn't fit well into the organization and we would all have been glad to get rid of him but we didn't feel that the people who were asking for information should be misled.

When they inquired about him the County Agent Leader wrote a letter glossing over some of his irascible traits. When the assistant in the office called our attention to it one Saturday morning we all agreed that the letter should be revised and we proceeded to revise it. The mistake we made was that we didn't take it up with Tom Coleman, the original writer, and the letter went off to Illinois. It did not occur to us that a copy was being sent to Stephen "Jim" Craig. When the copy and the revised letter came together Coleman was charged with being a double crosser. Well we had to face up to it. So we traipsed into the boss's office when this came to light and frankly faced up to the fact that we had





made a drastic error and that we had done something that we had no business doing without his approval. We made it clear that we were all very sorry about it and that we had all learned a lesson. I must say that he was a real gentleman about the whole thing. When he heard our story he just said "Let's just forget about it and go back to work." I'm sure that his reaction was due in part to the fact that he had a bit of a guilty conscience about his letter. In any case his response was wonderful and those of us who were involved learned a lesson. I certainly did and I never made that kind of mistake again. I never after revised something that the boss proposed without getting the boss's approval.

#### A Second Job As A County Agricultural Agent

DSM: The war was over in November 1918 and I continued on at Purdue throughout 1919 and the first four months of 1920. At one of the extension conferences in early 1920 Extension Director Ramsower and A. E. Anderson who was one of the county agents supervisors in Ohio approached me and asked me to consider the job as county agent in Franklin County, Ohio, of which Columbus is the county seat. This happened to be the adjoining county to my home county in which I had purchased a farm in early 1917 and I was anxious to be near by. I received an offer of \$3500 a year which was quite a boost over what I was getting. Director Christy agreed to meet their offer but I decided that I had not had enough experience as a county agent and would like more, plus the fact that I was anxious to get back near my farm which I had purchased earlier. So on May 1, 1920 I took over the job as County Agricultural Agent in Franklin County at Columbus, Ohio.

I bought a new Dodge roadster for use in the county and settled in for more than two years as





county agent. I found the job there much different in some respects than the first county agent job in Evansville, Indiana. First of all they had had a county agent previously in Franklin County and they hadn't had in Vanderburgh County, Indiana. In other words I was breaking new ground in my first county agent job.

The fact that Columbus was the seat of Ohio State University and the College of Agriculture made expertise much more easily available to the up and coming farmers of the county. If they wanted to go to the University to talk to a specialist they could do so, and many of them made use of the service of a specialist directly.

The county farm bureau had recently completed a membership drive in which they had signed up about two thousand members at ten dollars per year and as a result they agreed to pay a portion of my salary. The key leaders were all hepped up over hiring a farm bureau purchasing agent which they did. This distracted from interest in my job. By the end of a year the collection of dues from farm bureau members was a very real problem and membership had dropped so drastically that they couldn't afford to pay the portion of the salary to which they had committed themselves and at the same time support the cooperative purchasing program which they wanted to maintain if possible. During this dilemma I was asked whether I wouldn't be willing to reduce my salary by the amount of the farm bureau contribution which would allow them to carry the purchasing agent for a longer period. I replied that "I would not do so but that I would go one better namely I would present my resignation so that they would be free of any obligation to me." This was not acceptable to the board so the purchasing agent program was dropped.

During the more than two years the home demonstration agent and I supervised a large and active Four H club program for boys and girls which was probably our most important contribution.

Other activities for which I was responsible including an intensive poultry culling demonstration



program particularly during the first year of my incumbency. We established wheat variety improvement demonstrations throughout various sections of the county and provided for the distribution of new and pure line varieties which had been developed by the Agricultural Experiment Station. We organized a cow testing association, which was later renamed the Herd Improvement Association, so that the dairymen of the county were able to determine the production of their individual cows as well as their herds.

The normal activities included consultations in the office, as well as farm visits, followup on the demonstration program, supervision of the work of the Four H club leaders and the Four H club members.

A Move To My Second Supervisory Job As District  
Supervisor Of The Agriculture Extension Service

DSM: In the mid-summer of 1922 I was again approached by Director Ramsower of the Agricultural Extension Service and offered the position of District Supervisor of Agricultural extension work for the twenty-two northwestern Ohio counties. I accepted the job at a salary of \$3800 per year with what I thought was a promise of \$4000 for the following fiscal year.

In my new job I had the responsibility of all the extension work in the district of twenty-two counties. In addition, in lieu of a County Agent Leader which they had had previously, I was designated by the group of supervisors as the chairman of our supervisory group. This was my second supervisory job and I served in this particular spot from 1922 to 1933.

This provided my most extensive experience in supervision, including the training of new staff, recruitment procedures, liaison with the various groups of public officials, farm bureau members and



extension committees. I was fully responsible for the selection and training of all new county agents in my district and for securing of county appropriations from the boards of commissioners for the local contributions and for the liaison with the extension committees and the farm bureau boards.

I also worked closely with the home demonstrations supervisors and the Four H club supervisors as well as the extension subject matter specialist who served my territory. We had a very close working relationship with all the people involved in the area. Throughout most of the each year I traveled into the counties four days a week and was usually in the central office on Mondays and Saturdays.

During my early tenure in this particular job I found that I faced some real problems. There was a necessity for changing the personnel in some of the counties because several of the agents had been hired during World War I as emergency agents and had carried over for three or four years, but were not particularly well adapted to the job in those counties. Complaints about the work of the agents had become increasingly common so I had to face the problem of making changes. It was during this period that I developed what I called a philosophy for firing people. It was a very simple one. I came to the realization that if we had somebody who was not well adapted to the job and not doing well, the best solution was to try to find what their interests and their abilities were and to try to find a job into which they would fit. This was usually possible. I made a number of adjustments by helping people relocate into other jobs and then hired new agents in their place. In one or two instances I was not able to do this and I have always felt badly about the fact that I had to get rid of somebody when I couldn't help him relocate satisfactorily into another spot.

My most satisfactory case in this respect had to do with the agent in VanWert County, Glen Rule, who was well liked and a wonderful chap but miscast in this particular spot. It took me several months to find out just what his real interests and his real





abilities were. By happenstance I learned about what he would like to do. I was in his office one day on one of my regular visits. A farmer came in and during the interview that he had with the farmer I picked up a local newspaper and I found an article on the front page that was very well done. I waited until the farmer left and I tossed the paper over to him and said "Who wrote this article?" He said "I wrote it," with a bit of a blush and I said "Why don't you write like that all the time?" He said "Don't I?" and I said "No, your reports are not written like that and I have had a number of complaints from our extension editor about the quality of your reports. Get out a half a dozen of your monthly reports and let's take a look at them." So he did and we went over them carefully one by one. As a consequence he began to write the most interesting and well prepared reports of any of the agents in my whole territory. It was an outstanding switch.

In the meantime I asked him what his interests were. He said "Well, I'm interested in writing but I would also like to do some cartoon work." I found that he was very good at pen and ink work. I encouraged him to send in some cartoons to the farm papers and he had two or three of them accepted. He also wrote some articles for the farm papers and had some of those accepted. About a year or so later I had an opportunity to make a recommendation for one of the agents to go on sabbatical leave and I recommended Glen Rule. The recommendation was accepted and he went to Cornell University and took a year's work in journalism. Following this year of study he was hired as the Agricultural Extension Editor in Maine.

This was 1927. Several years later on, in 1935, I had the pleasure of hiring him again as a writer on the staff of the Soil Conservation Service in Washington after I joined that service. We needed two or three writers to prepare some additional publications which were badly needed at the time. He took on that job and stayed on in the Department of Agriculture as a member of the staff until he retired. He has been one of my most devoted friends throughout forty-six years.





## Supervisory Techniques

DSM: In my supervisory work I tried insofar as possible to teach by precept or example and suggestion where I felt adjustments were needed. The change in the type of reports which Glen Rule was submitting is a good example of this. One other example that comes to mind was the case of Francis Bell who was the county agent in Williams County, a snappy young man who was always on the go and had been sending in reports that had a snap to them and some of the specialists particularly the head of the poultry department resented. I was sure that the most of the things that he had said were not meant in the sense that they were taken. So I waited for the opportunity on one of my visits and said to him "Why do you write your monthly reports in such a way that you make people mad down at the college when you don't need to do so?" He said "What do you mean?" I said "You get out four or five of your monthly reports, and sit down on the other side of the table and I will read these to you as they sound to E. L. Dakin, head of the poultry department and to other people who felt that you were being snipish." So we did just that. After we had finished reading the four or five reports to which he had listened carefully, he said "I understand what you mean and I'll do better." He did. He began to write his reports in such a way that it didn't rile people and at the same time provided the kind of information that was required.

We had regular monthly county agent conferences in the district. Many of these conferences had to do with the discussion of teaching methods, demonstration methods, agricultural problems generally, and occasionally we had specialists scheduled to come in and talk about the programs that they were handling. In addition to that we did things that were not directly related to the agricultural programs. In one or two of the districts we started reading books and having a discussion or group book reviews. Books by men like Walter Lippmann and others. This I felt was related to their jobs and that it was important that they



have some studies of a broader nature rather than to spend all of their time on techniques in which they were fairly well grounded anyhow.

Watchful interest in the individual, looking and listening in the office and in meetings and in the field followed by tactful suggestion were the most important supervisory techniques that were helpful to the agents in my judgment. Timing was important in order to assure the right attention and at the same time securing acceptance. As I have indicated earlier, waiting for the opportunity to get examples and being able to teach by example and precept was much more effective than just talking in generalities.

Most of the new agents who were hired during this period were young, intelligent men but had only limited experience after college. Some of them were placed with older agents for a few months for training as assistant agents or as Four H club agents. Some had had two to five years of Smith Hughes Vocational training as agriculture teachers and most of these were flexible and open to suggestion. There were one or two older agents who were less flexible.

In one case at least I was resented as somebody who was interfering with his operations. It required much tact and a thoughtful approach in order to meet some of the problems that existed.

At the end of my first year I reminded Director Ramsower that it was my understanding that he had promised a two hundred dollar raise at the time I was hired. The Director hadn't remembered it in the same way and I had to press pretty hard in order to get it. But I did get it.

### A Crucial Decision

DSM:       Some time later perhaps after I had been on the job five years or so, I received an offer of \$5000



a year, which was quite a bit higher than I was getting at the University, to become an area salesman for a large feed company. I decided after thinking it over that I would accept this offer in case the University didn't meet it. Director Ramsower at this particular time was on leave, taking his sabbatical at Harvard University and Mr. George Crane who was secretary was acting Director. George was sympathetic to my problem and took the matter up with Dean Vivian who was not directly responsible for extension but who was usually consulted. The dean didn't approve of the increase in salary so there appeared to be nothing to do except to take the feed company's offer. However George Crane said he would like to write Director Ramsower before any final action. This was done. Much to my surprise and pleasure he approved the raise in spite of Dean Vivian's opinion.

I have always felt strongly that salaries should be flexible and they should not be controlled by what someone else was getting. This however was not the general view and it did make it rather difficult for the director to put somebody out of line with a raise above the income of the other supervisors. It did lead to some jealousy and tension which of course is always a thorn in the flesh of an administrator.

### Facing The Problems Of The Depression

DSM: When the depression of the early 1930's came on we had a period when county taxpayers' leagues were organized in many of the counties for which I was responsible. The county agent appropriations which were made by the county commissioners no matter how small were nearly always a target of that particular group of people. So we spent much time during this period fighting the loses of appropriations, which meant usually the elimination of the county agent in case the appropriation was not made.



This came at a time when I had two very young daughters and worry and concern over the dropping of county agents with their young families such as my own led to concern and worry about my own security. After several months of concern about this problem and about the agents who were losing their jobs and their livelihood I attended a meeting in Crawford County, Ohio, at Bucyrus where we had been trying for many weeks to find ways and means of saving the county agent's job by getting enough money together to provide for the local expenses. This particular evening it was decided that the battle was lost and it was not feasible to continue the program.

It so happened that the agent in this particular county had a young family. His youngsters were just about the age of my own youngsters and he was going to be without a job. This touched me very deeply so when I started home I decided that I must face up to the possibility that we might have to face a similar situation. So I decided that by the time I had covered the forty miles between Bucyrus and Columbus I would have completed an inventory of assets and decide what to do if worst came to worst.

I proceeded to determine which expenses should be eliminated first and in what order and the upshot of this inventory took us in my minds eye back to my father's tenant house as a hired man on the farm with limited wages but with a garden, no rent and lots of fresh air and sunshine until things got better. Mrs. Myer thoroughly agreed with me on this approach so we quit worrying. This rationalization of our problem was most comforting and we slept better for some time.

#### A Bit Of Back Stage Lobbying

DSM: Along about this same period a new state director of the budget decided that the agricultural agencies





of the state were getting twice the money they should have and he recommended a cut of fifty percent across the board on all agricultural appropriations including the extension service. Director Ramsower designated me as the strategist to fight this cut. We did this entirely by organizing groups in the counties to make tours to Columbus, county by county. This included extension leaders, Four H club leaders, members and parents, members of the farm bureau who made trips to the State Capitol to visit the Governor, George White, and their own legislators. We managed to schedule these tours so that at least one arrived each week-day for a period of weeks.

The Governor finally got tired of this so when a group arrived and asked to see him he would send for the state budget director and introduce him to the group and announce that "This is the gentleman responsible, so talk to him." The result of our campaign was that we took a cut of about twenty-five percent instead of fifty percent. Our salaries were reduced by about twenty-three and a half percent. We would have done even better if the representative of the Agricultural Experiment Station had not agreed to accept this cut without consulting with us. During this whole campaign I never appeared before the legislature or the budget director or the Governor. All of it was done by people who were interested in the program and who had no personal responsibility directly for the program and they were not receiving any money out of the funds that the appropriations provided.

This period from 1922 to 1933 was an important period in my supervisory experience. I learned a great many things for sure while working with young agents over a period of years. It helped to fix in mind several techniques which were useful to me throughout the rest of my administrative life. During 1933 with the advent of the New Deal agricultural programs I was assigned the task of supervising the federal agricultural programs for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in the state of Ohio. I relinquished my position as district supervisor in northwestern Ohio.



### Adding To My Farm Experience

DSM: Throughout all this period and from early 1917 on in addition to my job I had another experience and another responsibility which was well worthwhile. I had purchased a farm in 1917. When I moved back to Ohio in 1920 I spent most of my weekends with my partner walking over the farm, talking over plans, keeping in touch with what was going on, and having a part in the management. This experience was also well worthwhile for the reason that it gave me a real interest in the problems of the individual farmer who we were serving and I learned a great deal about the practicalities and vicissitudes of the everyday farmer's life. I seldom mentioned this when I talked to people who I came in contact with who were farmers but occasionally I got into an argument with someone who thought I was not a dirt farmer and it came in handy to let them know that I had also had some direct experience and a direct responsibility in practical farming.

### I Met The Most Wonderful Girl

DSM: The most important thing that happened to me during this period and perhaps during my whole life was the fact that I met a young lady who came to Ohio State to serve as a specialist in the field of Interior Decorating, and as a Clothing Specialist in the Extension Service. I might not have met her had I been in some other occupation. Her name was Jenness Wirt and I met her in November 1923. We were engaged at Easter time and were married the following September on my thirty-third birthday. There is absolutely no question about the fact that Jenness has been a tremendous factor in my further development from 1923 up to the present time.



In addition to her help and moral support which she has always amply provided, we developed a family which added responsibilities and which was an important consideration in the decisions that were made.

At the time I proposed to Jenness she said she was going back to school for a year which she needed to do to complete her degree. I told her that I had hoped to get a sabbatical leave during the following year and if she would wait we would both go to college because I wanted to get my Masters degree and she could finish her degree. Fortunately she agreed. As a consequence in the fall of 1925 we matriculated into Columbia University in New York City. She was specializing in the field of Fine Arts and received her degree in 1926. I was enrolled in Teachers College and I got my Masters degree in Education. I took several courses in Columbia College including courses in sociology, economics, and finance, subjects that I had felt the need of for quite some time.

During this year in Columbia we lived in one room. We had to skimp, of course, because we were not on full pay at the time. We found that we could get along together. It was a real trial run I presume. In any case we came through it and it was a well worthwhile interlude that added not only to our experience but to our abilities to do our jobs.

As a result of our marriage we have three very wonderful daughters and three very excellent sons-in-law and eleven grandchildren. As I look back and realize that I might have been a bachelor all the rest of my life I shudder to think what a drab existence this would have been as compared with the existence that we have had with our family and with the opportunity we have had to watch our children and our grandchildren develop.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE COMING OF THE NEW DEAL AND A CHANGE OF WORK

DSM: We go from here to the period when my work changed in 1933 with the advent of the New Deal at which time I was assigned by the Director of Extension in Ohio to supervise the new agricultural programs which emerged from the Department of Agriculture and from the Agriculture Adjustment Administration which was more or less a separate entity for quite some time. This was new, very new.

One of the first jobs was to tell unbelieving farmers that they should market their pigs before they got to the place where they produced a lot of meat because of the over-production of pork. There was a great deal of criticism throughout many years of the program of "killing little pigs" but that was the first step in the corn hog program, in which I was a participant. We had a lot of skeptics at that time.

The major programs that we had in Ohio which were initiated by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration were wheat, corn and hogs, tobacco, and to some extent sugar beets in northwestern Ohio. There was some interest in dairy and in some areas vegetable marketing and programs of that type. We had, in other words, most of the major national programs that were developed in some section of Ohio because of the varied type of agriculture. About the only major one we didn't have was the cotton program because we grew no cotton in Ohio.

During this first year of the program in 1933 and early 1934 the corn hog, wheat and tobacco programs took up much of my time and interest. Yet it was necessary to keep up on all phases of the Agricultural Adjustment Program because we never knew when something new was going to be projected. Consequently I worked long hours. Most of the time I





went back to the office and worked until ten or eleven o'clock at night throughout the whole year and of course, on weekends.

The policies and rulings were made in Washington but within the limits of those policies and rulings we had full opportunity to carry out our work in Ohio using the methods we thought were best. We had a corn hog committee which was appointed by the Washington office but they didn't interfere with the work that I was doing. They served as advisors and had occasional meetings. We had one chap on the committee who felt that farmers should handle it entirely but he didn't press so hard that it interfered with what we were doing at the University.

I remember one incident that stands out during this first year. Doctor Albert Black who was in charge of the corn hog program called me from Purdue and said he was in Indiana and if we had anything to talk about that was important he could come by Ohio on his way back to Washington but it would mean a meeting on Sunday. I said "Come ahead, I have a lot of questions." We got the corn hog committee together for a meeting on Sunday morning for two or three hours. I had twenty some questions already written out. We took about two hours to go through this list of questions and discuss them. Most of them had not arisen before so in most cases Doctor Black would make a note and say he would have to take it back to Washington to talk to the policy committee about it. So we didn't get the answers on many of them. When I got to the end of my questions I pushed my notes back and said "Well, believe it or not that's all the questions I have today." Al Black said immediately "I'll bet by God by next week you will have just as many more."

After the early stages of the program I had begun to realize that in a State like Ohio where we had farmers who were growing wheat, were growing corn and hogs and maybe even in some cases tobacco, that we might come to the time where if they had inspectors or people from these individual programs doing the checking that we might have a good deal of duplication, because of the fact that one week someone might check the wheat acreage and the next the corn hog program,



the next week tobacco and so on. This concerned me. In February of 1934 I went to Washington for three days to get a lot of questions answered that had developed in the meantime and which I didn't seem to be able to get the answers on from correspondence or long distance telephone. Because of my concern about this compliance problem and the lack of planning on the part of the divisions for meeting the problem. I decided to see Chester David before I returned to Ohio. He was heading the Agricultural Adjustment Program at that time.

So on Saturday afternoon I waited in his office until three or three thirty without lunch. He hadn't had lunch because he had been in a meeting. I finally got to see him and he listened to me for about ten minutes and I laid out the problems as I saw them and then he began to smile and without listening further he said "We don't have many people down here from Ohio; why don't you come down here and handle this for us." I said "I don't want to be embarrassed by being offered the job because that isn't why I came to Washington or why I came to see you. I simply wanted to pose the problem so that you could do something about it." He said "Well, I realize what you have said is true but nevertheless I think maybe something ought to be done about this," and he insisted. He called in Grover Trent who was acting in charge of the production division at that time because Victor Christgau was in the field. He asked Trent to take me back to his office and to see that I got a Form 57 and filled it out and that I made an application. Because he wanted me to come to Washington.

Well, I wouldn't take the Form 57. He tried to put it in my pocket. I told him I wasn't interested. The upshot of it was that I went back to Ohio. I reported to the Director what had happened. The proposal was that I come in for three months to get the program started. Nothing developed immediately excepting that there was a letter or two urging that I come on but I turned it down.

Along about the first of April, several weeks after I had been to Washington, we were in a meeting in Indianapolis on Dairy problems, the director and



some of the supervisors and myself. It was a meeting of the leaders in the Agriculture Adjustment Administration program, a regional meeting and it included several states in the midwest territory. During the meeting a call came in for the director from Washington and he came back he called me out of the meeting to tell me that Chester David had called, and insisted that he send me to Washington to do this compliance job.

We discussed the matter and Director Ramsower finally said "Well, I think it might be a good experience for you and I think maybe you ought to go for the three months." It just so happened that my good wife agreed with Dr. Ramsower and she felt very strongly that I should go.

### The Move To Washington

DSM: On April 12, 1934 I went alone to Washington. The family continued to live in Ohio until June and much to my surprise when I got to Washington I found that nothing had been done about setting up a job. They set up a job as chief of a new compliance section in the production division and I was introduced to Victor Christgau who was the chief of the production division whom I had never met and who I found had not been consulted about this particular job. Furthermore I found that none of the division chiefs with whom I was going to have to work had been consulted and they were all against the idea.

So I spent about three months of the most frustrating time that I have ever had in my life trying to do something about something that nobody wanted done excepting the chief of the Agricultural Adjustment Program. I would bring in suggestions to meetings. They would be knocked down one after the other and it was really a very very tough period. Finally in a few of the states where the programs weren't too





complex; for example, in Iowa where the program was practically all corn-hogs and in Idaho where it was mainly a wheat program we did get some compliance men appointed who helped supervise compliance for all of the programs including the lesser ones as well as the major ones. The last six months of 1934 were somewhat easier than the first three months but it still was not easy.

In June of 1934 they asked that my leave be extended for another three months and the director agreed. I was on leave from Ohio State University from my job that I had there as a Supervisor of Extension. We rented a house for three months from people who were going to Rehobeth Beach for the summer and brought the family down in June with the expectation that we would be going back in September.

In the meantime Jenness had moved from the house we had been living in in Columbus, Ohio, with the help of friends of ours the Clarence Fergusons (he later became Director of Extension at Ohio State University) while I was busy in Washington. She moved to another house. The family never lived in that house. She rented it for the summer to a couple who were taking graduate work. So in the fall then when a further extension of leave was granted we decided to give up the house. Jenness went back, packed up and had all the goods put in storage. We rented another furnished house in Washington. The upshot of it was that we stayed on in Washington for almost a year and a half on leave from Ohio State University which was a little longer than normal but they were very decent about it.

In January of 1935 the "purge" in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration took place. There was quite a division within the administration between some of the very liberal lawyers including Jerome Frank, and some of the others including my boss Victor Christgau who was on Jerry Frank's side regarding methods. Finally Chester Davis decided that he had to do something about it so he fired a lot of people, including my boss.

Since I was on leave and this didn't seem to affect my economic status too much. I found myself having





meetings with people who were looking strained and upset who were still on the job and who had lost their bosses. Foolishly I kidded them and asked them once or twice who they were working for this morning and they didn't find it a bit funny! After four or five days I realized that I was sitting all alone in a area with no production division which had been eliminated and I had no boss. A day or two later I got a call from Chester Davis' office. I went up to see him. He chuckled and said "Dillon, I hope your ego isn't too badly hurt. Very frankly, we forgot all about you for a little while in the shakedown of things and we came to the realization that here you were and something ought to be done about it. How would you like to go to work for Howard Tolley in the planning division?" I said "I would be delighted."

### Another Job Change

DSM: So I moved over to the planning division and worked for Howard Tolley who was another of my good bosses by the way. In that position I could continue to be in close touch and informed about policy within the administration. I had the opportunity often to meet with the top people in the AAA as well as with the Secretary in connection with program policy and of course with all the various divisions. I was there until September.

In the meantime one or two things of importance should be mentioned. One of them was the fact that the first draft of the proposed Soil Conservation Districts Act had been prepared by M. L. Wilson and Philip Glick and was circulated to various key people in the department for review and comment. Howard Tolley tossed it into my lap. I mention this because it became part of my life within a few weeks.

The other event that happened during this period was the Supreme Court decision that the Agricultural



Adjustment Act was unconstitutional. So it required a complete revamping.

### Another Proposed Move

DSM: In the meantime I had been asked to take on a job with the Resettlement Administration under Rex Tugwell as assistant to Dr. Gray who headed up the division of lands. At the same time I was offered the job as chief of a new division in the Soil Conservation Service to be called the Division of States Relations and Planning. This put me in a bit of a spot because Rex Tugwell was not only head of the Resettlement Administration but he was Under Secretary of Agriculture. I had to tell him that I would prefer to go to the Soil Conservation Service and he put the pressure on pretty heavily to get me to change my mind to come over to the Resettlement Administration but I stayed with my interest in the SCS.

So I told the SCS that I was willing to come providing that I could get the kind of pay and the kind of grade to justify my staying on. I was getting \$6800 a year in the Agricultural Adjustment Program and the pay for chiefs of divisions in the Department of Agriculture at that time was \$5600. I said I didn't feel that I was justified in accepting the grade at \$5600 but if they could get the grade moved the next step up to \$6500 I would be interested. Otherwise I could live as well or better by going back to Columbus at a somewhat lower salary because it cost me less to live there than it did in Washington.

To make a long story short Milton Eisenhower, who had been assigned by the Secretary to help integrate the Soil Conservation Service into the department, worked most of the summer to get the Civil Service Commission to set up a grade that would pay \$6500. He finally made it in early September and I'm sure that every division head in the Department of Agri-



culture were very happy and were ready to thank me for sticking it out because everybody else also got a raise. As a result of having won this little battle, on September 15th I moved over to the Soil Conservation Service as the chief of the division of State Relations and Planning.

This salary sounds incredible now of course but we have had tremendous inflation in the meantime. We lived pretty well on \$6500 a year in Washington at that time.

#### Initiation Of Aerial Land Surveys

DSM: Before I leave the AAA program I should mention one or two important things that happened during the last several months that I was with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. One was the fact that I was sold on the idea of experimenting aeroplane surveys for use in compliance work. A chap by the name of Brown, who was a private engineer stayed with me until he convinced me that aeroplane mapping was practical. I got permission to experiment with this type of mapping in three different counties. One of them was a county in which Raliegh, North Carolina, is located. It had a lot of small farms, tobacco farms mainly; also a county in Minnesota; and one in Texas.

They took aerial photographs of the land, then by the use of equipment on the ground they could use measuring apparatus to delineate the different types of plots and come out with measurements that were more accurate than measurements with tape measures.

We were after the amount of acreage that people had planted to crops that were covered by the AAA program.

I found out in the meantime that in Soil Conservation Service, particularly Charles Collier who



worked for the Soil Conservation Service, was working on the same problem in connection with soil surveys and he had gone much further than we had gone. I didn't get my report on this aerial survey results completed until after I had moved over to the SCS but I sent it back to Chester Davis and indicated that I thought each of the division chiefs should see it. I'm sure that nobody saw it immediately because in the following spring I happened to be over in the department for lunch one day and Claude Wickard, who at that time was head of the corn-hog program came rushing up to me and said "We want to see you." I said "What do you want to see me about?" He said "We want to know about that aerial survey work you were doing." I said "You mean you haven't seen it?" He grinned, shook his head and said "No we haven't seen it." So I told him where it was.

I went around and saw his assistant and talked to him about it. They immediately went to work on it and adopted the practice of using aerial surveys in their compliance work. Within a year or two all of the compliance work involving land measurement was done by aerial survey.





## CHAPTER VIII

## A BRAND NEW JOB IN THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

DSM: Another important development that came about very soon after I moved over to the Soil Conservation Service, the AAA was groping for an alternative to the Agricultural Adjustment law which had been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. It happened that during my first week with SCS word came to me that a suggestion had been made by one of the newsmen that they take the very neat little act which the Soil Conservation Service had gotten passed authorizing the soil erosion and soil conservation work and rework it so it could serve as a vehicle for a rewrite of the AAA law.

When I learned about this I hied myself over to the department and immediately went into a meeting in Chester Davis' office which I was allowed to do because I knew the Secretary. Sure enough they were rewriting the act regardless of its effect on SCS and were about ready to go to Congress to ask passage of the revised draft.

They not only incorporated the AAA program but they had done a great deal of mayhem to the Soil Conservation Act that we already had on the books. I made a plea that whatever they did that they simply add amendments to our act rather than change a word in the original language to accomplish a revision of the Agricultural Adjustment Authorization.

I was able to convince them that it was not fair that the act should be torn up and rewritten as they proposed to do. Chester Davis listened and then turned to Mastin White, who was the solicitor at that time, and said "Mastin, what do you think of this?" He said "I think that Dillon is right. I think that it not only can be done by adding additional sections to the act rather than interfering with the act as it now stands but it probably would make just as good if not a better one."



So the meeting broke up at that instant because Chester Davis said "OK Mastin, get to the Hill as fast as you can and stop the action and let's rewrite it." It was just that close. So my experience in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration stood me in good stead when I moved over to the Soil Conservation Service.

I neglected to mention that one of the other things that I was called upon to do during the last few months with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration was to serve on a committee of which Milton Eisenhower was chairman. We had a representative from the Forest Service, a representative from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and myself representing Dr. Tolley. The committee's job was to write a program for the integration of the Soil Conservation Service into the Department of Agriculture. The service had been set up originally in the Interior Department and it was a matter of trying to write a program that would not hurt the SCS and at the same time would more or less satisfy the Bureau of Plant Industry, the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, the Bureau of Soils and others who thought they ought to be doing that job.

#### Origin Of The Soil Erosion Service In The Department Of The Interior

DSM: The reason why the Soil Erosion Service was established in the Department of the Interior was an interesting story in itself. Rex Tugwell who was one of the instigators of the Soil Conservation Service was quite interested in it and so was the President. When they decided to set up an agency to promote erosion control work Tugwell was given the job as Under Secretary of Agriculture. He called in Hugh Bennett who was the best informed man in this field in the Department of Agriculture, and who had been working for Erosion Control throughout the years since 1903 at the time he joined the Department as a young man doing



soil survey work. He told Hugh Bennett about the prospects for such a program and said that because of the fact that there were bureaus within the Department that were vying for the job they thought they were going to have to set it up in the Interior Department. Would he be interested? Hugh was hell bent, of course, because he was always hell bent to do anything about soil erosion and this gave him an opportunity. He was willing to leave the Department and move over to Interior, which he did. During the first several months the agency was known as the Soil Erosion Service in the Department of Interior.

It was moved back to the department in April or May of 1935 and renamed and it was shortly after this that I came into the picture because Jack Cutler who was Regional Director at Dayton, Ohio, had come into Washington and had recommended that the kind of division that I ultimately headed, the division of States Relations and Planning be established and recommended that I head it. This was in May 1935 as I remember it, when I was first consulted. As a result of this recommendation I received an offer but it took all summer to get the job worked out so I moved over in September.

The Soil Conservation Service at the time I joined the organization was responsible for two major activities. One of them was the establishment and supervision of a large number of erosion control projects throughout the country which Hugh Bennett had initiated and the other was the supervision of a very large number of Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) camps. These were utilized in connection with the local soil conservation projects. They were doing tree planting, terracing, most of which was done by machine, but there were certain phases where hand work was needed; also nursery work. Soil Conservation Service maintained a number of nurseries throughout the country to provide planting stock for the establishment of trees and shrubs in areas that needed cover.

There were, I believe, ten regions at the time with a regional director in charge of each, plus a state soil conservation coordinator in each of the states. He was responsible to the regional office.





The extension service generally throughout the country or the state extension directors generally throughout the country were quite unhappy that the Soil Conservation Service was working directly with farmers on the various projects and in the use of CCC camps. They felt that they should come under the control of the Extension Service. Hugh Bennett thought just the opposite. As a matter of fact he was somewhat embittered against the Extension Service because of the fact that only in one or two states had they done anything, in his judgment, of any importance toward developing an erosion control program other than the all-out terracing programs that were extant in many of the old southern states, and he felt much of that was overdone. So it was necessary if we were going to work within the states to get the cooperation of the Extension Service to work out a program which would reasonably satisfy them and get their assistance and at the same time get ahead with our work.

My major job at the beginning of my work in the SCS was trying to establish this kind of relationship with my old cohorts. I had worked many years in agricultural extension as a county agent and later as a supervisor. I knew all of the directors well at that time and we had many arguments every time we had a meeting.

I had the opportunity to set up my own new division. I was able to hire the personnel which I selected. We had three sections within the division. I had to fight the battle to get the kind of grades that I felt I needed in order to secure the personnel of my choice. These grades, were controlled at that time by the Civil Service Commission because the Soil Conservation Service which had not been under Civil Service was blanketed into the Civil Service in early December of 1935.

One of the new sections was a section on extension relations and was headed by J. Philip Campbell who was a former extension director in Georgia and who had good relations with the extension directors throughout the country. The information section was moved into my division. The second new section had to do





with planning. T. L. Gaston whom I had worked with in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration headed this particular section. The work of this section developed very shortly into plans for the development of cooperation with the states through the medium of soil conservation districts acts which were proposed by the Department of Agriculture.

In view of Hugh Bennett's attitude toward the Extension Service I had a bit of a problem when I first moved over. Some of the first memoranda or letters that I had prepared to go out to the field and to the extension directors didn't suit him and nearly every time he saw the Extension Service mentioned he would take his pencil and draw a line right through it. I finally decided that I couldn't carry on like that so when this happened the third time to a memorandum of this type I said "I think, Hugh, that I had better present my resignation." I thought he was going to cry. He said "Oh no, don't do that, don't even talk like that." So we chatted about it a little while and I told him very frankly that if we were going to carry on work with the States we were going to have to work out some kind of sound relationship. I made it clear that I was not going to sell him down the river. From that time on he never even read my letters or memorandum that were going out, he just signed them. So I had no more trouble with that situation although he still did not like the Extension Service.

Before I moved over to the SCS I had the opportunity to review the proposed States Soil Conservation Districts Act which had been prepared by M. L. Wilson and Philip Glick within the Department of Agriculture. As a consequence one of the first responsibilities that I had after I established myself within the SCS in September in addition to our job of Extension Relations was to get acceptance of a Soil Conservation Districts Act by Hugh Bennett and his staff. In order to get approval by the states it seemed necessary to include the Agricultural Extension Directors, Directors of Agricultural Experiment Stations, and the Dean of the Agricultural College on the state committee that was to be established by the Act to give general supervision to the establishment and operation of the local districts which were proposed under such an Act.



This problem of getting the Extension Directors in particular and the other college people as members of the state committee created a bit of a problem within the SCS but the proposal was finally accepted.

The proposed Soil Conservation Districts Act was essential in the minds of M. L. Wilson and of many of the rest of us within the Department in order to establish new local agencies which would plan and supervise a program of erosion control without having to do it through the county commissioners and the established county setup. They were not authorized to carry on programs of this type. Furthermore they were busy with roads, and ditches and a lot of other things that they were traditionally responsible for and it was felt that it would not work well under these old established regimes. Furthermore there were many people in the Department and in the SCS that felt that such an organization should be established on a water-shed basis rather than on county lines.

Among other things in the act was provision for the establishment of land use regulations, which could be formulated by the districts in order to require certain erosion control methods on the part of farmers which would help to protect their neighbors and help to protect the soil in the area. This, of course, was an entirely new authorization which was not available to anyone at that time.

#### The Battle To Secure Passage Of The State Soil Conservation District Act

DSM: I don't remember exactly when we got final approval of the draft of the Act by the Department, by the departmental agencies, by the Soil Conservation Service and by the Secretary of Agriculture but the Act was printed up within a few months. It was in the early spring of 1936 before we were able to distribute a copy of the proposed Act to the States. Then the



battle started in many of the states because there was opposition to having such a law. Certain of the Extension Directors in particular opposed it and in some cases the deans and other college people. Some of the states adopted the Act almost immediately. One of the first states to adopt it was North Carolina which was Hugh Bennett's home state. Many of the states in the south adopted the Act without much argument because of the very serious problem of erosion which had developed throughout many years, caused principally by their type of clean cultivation cotton and corn and other clean cultivated crops.

The hardest fights in order to get the Act adopted developed in Texas, Kentucky and Missouri with lesser resistance in the states of Oregon and California. We had arguments in other states and we had to spend a good deal of time in convincing would-be members of the state committees that it was important and sooner or later we were able to do it. There were adjustments made in the provisions of the Act in some of the states. Many of the states objected to passing an Act with the land use regulations included but fortunately some of them did and some of them have been useful particularly in the wind erosion areas.

Fortunately for me I had complete support within the Secretary of Agriculture's office when the battle developed in states like Texas and Kentucky in particular. Telegrams would come in asking the Secretary's point of view, hoping to get this support. I always wrote the answers and sent them over and Paul Appleby and Milton Eisenhower (Paul Appleby, the Secretary's top assistant, in particular) saw to it that the Secretary was convinced that my answers were proper so they were signed and sent back in due order. The battle went on but we finally won the battle in all of these states. By the time I left the SCS in early 1942, thirty-seven states had adopted the States Soil Conservation Act.





### A Promotion To Assistant Chief

DSM: In the midst of all of this I became Assistant Chief of the Soil Conservation Service in 1938 and turned over the work of the division of States Relations and Planning to J. Philip Campbell who had headed up the section on State Relations earlier.

### An Attempted Take Over

DSM: In the meantime the battle on the part of the state extension directors to take over the work of the Soil Conservation Service continued. Along in the late 1930's Harry Brown who had been extension director in the State of Georgia came into the Department as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. At that time Cecil Creel who was Director of the Agricultural Extension work in the state of Nevada was chairman of the extension relations committee, of the Land Grant College Association which functioned as sort of a watch dog for the extension directors generally in regard to legislation and cooperation with departmental agencies. Creel and his group evidently convinced Harry Brown that he ought to convince the Secretary that the proposal to have the extension service take over the SCS was a good one.

I found out that they had already been to the Senate and had talked to Senator Bankhead of Alabama who was Chairman of the Senate Agricultural Committee and he had agreed to some language to make the change provided the Secretary would recommend it. Before we knew it they practically had the Secretary committed to approve the language but somehow it came to our attention. So we went into battle. We convinced the Secretary that he should arrange a meeting with the extension committee and with the SCS representatives. I was Assistant Chief and Hugh Bennett told me I was





to be spokesman. Well, we argued the case before the Secretary and I must have been really steamed up because after the meeting broke up we arranged to see the Secretary the next morning along with M. L. Wilson, the Under Secretary and William Jump the budget director for the Department.

When we went into the Secretary's office, before I had a chance to say anything, Secretary Wallace turned to me and said "Dillon, yesterday as you were making your presentation I was reminded of the fact that you were sitting in the same position in relation to the Secretary of Agriculture fighting the battle against the takeover as I was with the President of the United States, because of the fact that the Interior Department was trying to take over the Forest Service." This evidently appealed to him as something that was important and relevant.

As a result of further discussions that morning he definitely decided to tell Harry Brown that he would not approve the proposed language. As a consequence there was no change in the law. This was a major victory for the SCS and for me personally.

#### A Proposal To Move Some Regional Offices

DSM: One other incident that I remember quite clearly resulted from an idea that was developed by Paul Appleby and Milton Eisenhower, who was working very closely with him at the time. They decided that the various regional offices within the Department of Agriculture should have the same location in the field so that they would have easy access to each other and be able to carry on better working relations. Such agencies as the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service had a great deal in common, for example, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and other agencies which had field offices of this type. Well, there seemed to be no getting away from it so we had



to start work on this matter. One of the proposals was to move the office from Spartanburg, South Carolina, to Atlanta, Georgia, where the Forest Service was already located. This, of course, was stepping on Jimmy Byrnes toes who was probably the most powerful Senator in the U.S. Senate at the time. He was highly respected. He carried the battle against the change and we lost which didn't hurt my feelings too much. Nevertheless at some cocktail party or other he was heard to make the remark "That those two Jews Eisenhower and Myer were planning to wreck his program in South Carolina."

During the midst of this battle for the changes of the offices I was called upon to go with the Secretary to some kind of meeting. In route I told him that we were planning to move the regional office of the SCS in Des Moines, Iowa, to Milwaukee where the Forest Service Office was already located. This, of course, meant that we were moving a major office out of the Secretary's home state and into another state. He asked me a few questions about it and what was going on and I explained to him what we were called upon to do and he didn't rebel. We moved the office.

### The Pearl Harbor Attack And A Change In Status

DSM: In the fall of 1941 Hugh Bennett was asked to go to Venezuela to do some soil survey work for the government of Venezuela. He was down there for several weeks and during that period I was acting Chief of the Soil Conservation Service. It was at this time that the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour and we were in the war.

Following the Declaration of War in December 1941 I awakened one morning and found a story in the newspapers which stated that Secretary of Agriculture, Claude Wickard, had established a new agency within the department known as the Agricultural Conservation and Adjustment Administration. "Spike" Evans who had



been for quite some time chief of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration was made administrator and I was announced as Assistant Administrator of this new overall agency. Neither Evans nor I were informed of this action ahead of time. This came as a complete shock to both of us.

It developed that this was an idea that had been dreamed up by a couple of the Secretary's assistants, Sam Bledsoe and Bob Shields. Evidently they thought there should be some consolidation of the agencies and if I were moved over I would want to bring the SCS into control under my wing in the new organization. As a consequence it put me in a pretty hot spot. I immediately wired Hugh Bennett in Venezuela what had happened and he was out in the field so it took time to find him. When he returned to Washington it was early January. He was so upset that I was completely ignored. He brought Lewis Merrill, who was the Regional Director at the time in Fort Worth, Texas, into Washington as his right hand man.

Fortunately Merrill and I had worked together very closely on the fight to get a Soil Conservation Districts law established in Texas and he had complete confidence in me. He understood the problem so he came in every day to tell me what was going on. This was the only communication I had with anyone in the SCS for days on end.

I am sure that Hugh Bennett thought that maybe I had something to do with the Secretary's action. In any case he was very upset about the whole matter. I had always made it very clear to him that nothing happened that I didn't tell him about in respect to the service as soon as I knew it. I explained to him that it had all happened without my having anything to do with it and that he could be reassured that I was not going to move in to wreck the service but that didn't satisfy him.

So from early January until mid-June I at first was Assistant Administrator of the new organization and then from late January to mid-June I was acting administrator. "Spike" Evans was appointed to the Federal Reserve Board and left the department during





January. I had made up my mind that I was not going to be a party to shuffling the agencies and the take over of the AAA and the SCS completely as I was urged to do. So my job in the meantime had to do with handling the tough problems that nobody else wanted to handle in regard to the various agencies. Occasionally I had a meeting of the agency chiefs to talk about inter-agency problems.

As an example of the type of tough problems that I had to handle: the AAA had a real problem between the southern region and the western region because of the battle as to how the cover crop seeds which were grown in Oregon should be handled in arranging for sales to cotton farmers in the South. Since nobody wanted to handle it I had to referee this battle. I did it and I'm sure that I did it without very much support on either side but I finally had to make a decision and I made it.

In the case of SCS the major problem that came up during this period was the fact that our appropriations by the Congress were reduced for administrative purposes and it seemed necessary to eliminate some of the regional offices. One of the regional offices which had been established because the former chairman of the House Agricultural Committee, Marvin Jones, insisted was a wind erosion region be established at Amarillo, Texas. If it wasn't established he said he would write it into law. So it had been established.

In the meantime Marvin Jones had moved out of the Congress and over to the Court of Claims. We decided that we didn't need the Amarillo office any more and it was to be dropped. It fell to me to go to see Marvin Jones. He didn't like it but he said he would not stand in the way. I came back to report to the Secretary that I had informed Marvin Jones and he had accepted the fact that we were going to do it. He looked at me and smiled and said "What did Grover Hill say?"

Grover Hill was at that time Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. He was an appointee upon the recommendation of Marvin Jones and he was a great supporter of Marvin Jones. I said "I haven't talked with Grover."





He said "I think you had better do so." So I went and talked with Grover Hill and Grover really put up a scrap. He told me that we were being traitors to Jones and that we were cutting the ground out from under him. We spent an hour or two together. He tried to convince the Secretary to overrule us but we stood pat and we got the job done.

These items were examples of the kind of dirty work that I had to handle during this period and I didn't get too much thanks for it. Nobody in the different groups that came under the administration that I was heading liked the new organization. Incidentally the Agricultural Conservation and Adjustment Administration included four agencies: the Agricultural Adjustment Administration; the Soil Conservation Service; Crop Insurance Service; and the Sugar Division.





Dillon Myer, Director of WRA, and Mrs. Myer in center of photograph, on a visit to the Grenada or Amache Relocation Center. James Lindley, Center Director, stands next to Mrs. Myer. The young lady at the Director's right was the artist in charge of the silk screen art shop. 1944.



Dillon Myer, FPHA Commissioner, signing a conditional sales agreement with the Veterans Co-operative Housing Association for the purchase of Naylor Gardens, Washington, D.C. From left to right: Louis B. Arnold, Harry DeWitt, President of the Co-op, Mr. Myer, Nicholas Zapple, and Col. William Roberts. 1947.



Dillon Myer (seated) at the time of taking over the Presidency of the Institute of Inter-American Affairs in late 1947. Colonel Harris, the retiring President, standing.



Three former Directors of the Cuban Refugee program at Miami, Florida. Dillon Myer (center) was Director for several weeks during early 1961 until R.A. Wise took over. Arthur Lazell, former Assistant Director, became Director after Mr. Wise returned to his position as Director of the Miami office of the Social Security Administration.

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## CHAPTER IX

THE MOVE FROM AGRICULTURE TO THE WAR RELOCATION  
AUTHORITY IN 1942

DSM: After serving as Acting Administrator of the Agriculture Conservation and Adjustment Administration, which Secretary Wickard had established in December of 1941, I was asked to take on the job as Director of the War Relocation Authority in June of 1942. The WRA was an independent agency established by Executive Order on March 19, 1942.

We were having a party at our house on a Saturday evening June 13th, and among others present was Milton Eisenhower and Helen, his very wonderful wife (later deceased). Milton had taken on the job as Director of the WRA in March of 1942 much against his will. It so happened that during the afternoon before they came to our party he received a request from Elmer Davis to become his deputy in the new agency known as the Office of War Information. It was quite obvious to me that he was all hepped up about it. He talked about it on our porch and I could hear bits of the conversation.

About nine o'clock Milton went into our dining room where we kept our piano, sat down and started to play. When the party was over Milton and Helen were the last ones to leave and as we walked out together I said "Milton you are going to take the job at OWI, aren't you?" He said "Yes I am." I said "You decided that at nine o'clock tonight just before you went in to play the piano," and he said "That's right." Then he turned to me and he said "Will you take on the job as Director of WRA?" I said "Well, this is a bit of a shock but let's talk about it." So we set up a date for Monday evening.

Jenness and I went down to the Eisenhowers and we spent a couple of hours going over the whole situation and finally I said to Milton "Do you think I should take this job?" He said "Dillon, if you can





sleep and still carry on the job my answer would be yes. I can't sleep and do this job. I had to get out of it." So I told him that I would take on the job. This was on Monday evening and Wednesday afternoon on June 17th I took over the chair which he had vacated.

Fortunately I had had some part in the selection of the key personnel in Washington or at least most of them. Milton Eisenhower and I rode in the same car pool. We had been working together for years and I don't think he made any appointments, at least from among those people that we had worked with in Agriculture, that he didn't discuss with me. So except for two or three people among the top staff, they were all people that had worked for me or with me within the Department of Agriculture. I found out later that before Milton finally made a recommendation that I take on the job he checked it with the staff and they had approved the idea which of course pleased me very much.

When Milton said that he couldn't sleep he meant literally that because he was very disturbed about the whole WRA concept. He found the situation that he was facing most difficult, with the antagonisms on the part of much of the American public against the Japanese because we were at war with Japan and many people did not differentiate between the Japanese Americans and the Japanese with whom we were at war. At the same time the problems of moving people from assembly centers on the West Coast into temporary relocation centers I'm sure got on his nerves very badly, and he was practically ill.

HP: You are just as sensitive to this and to the injustices involved as he was. How do you explain that you were able to take it more tranquilly then he was?

DSM: Well, I think first of all Milton had been in public relations work most of his life. He was a public relations man first, last and all the time and he did not like to get in between the rock and the hard place. He certainly was in between on this job because the pressures on both sides were very, very heavy and this upset him very much.





In my own case even though I think I am quite sensitive and I had some emotional spots during the four years that I was Director of the WRA I never have been bothered when it comes to carrying on a job that I feel that I am responsible for. As a consequence I didn't worry myself too much about the pressures from the racists and from the people who were trying to beat us into the ground all of the time.

I was able to take it in stride and fortunately I have always been a good sleeper and I still am. Consequently I did the job as I felt that it should be done and with a very few exceptions I went to bed at night and slept soundly until time to get up the next morning.

HP: I take it you were no more in sympathy with the philosophy in back of the evacuation than Milton was, but that you felt that there was a job to be done and it might as well be done as well as possible.

DSM: That's right. The war was on and I was requested to take on a special war-time job with a Presidential appointment and unless you have a very good reason you don't turn down a Presidential request during wartime.

#### The Evacuation Authorization and Initiation

DSM: I, of course, was not sympathetic to the evacuation and the move that was made by General DeWitt. The truth of the matter however is that when I first took over I had very little information about the Japanese people on the West Coast and I had very little clear information about the basic reasons that were given for the evacuation and whether the reasons were sound or whether they weren't. I found out very quickly after I became Director that most of the reasons were phony and many of the rumors which were used to justify the evacuation which came out of the attack on Hawaii were proven to be completely untrue as were many other things



that were put forth by the people who were pressuring for the evacuation previous to the time when General DeWitt had made the final decision in February 1942. The evacuation didn't actually take place until March but he made his recommendations to the War Department on February 13 in which he did an all out job of trying to justify the move that he had proposed to make if given the authority to do so. He got that authority on February 19 and announcements were made that there would be an evacuation.

In the beginning he allowed people to move out from the California and the West Coast on a voluntary basis but after a short time it was quite obvious that these people were running into trouble because the people in the hinterland where they were trying to settle didn't quite understand who they were. They were fearful and they thought that they were having a Japanese invasion in some cases. Milton Eisenhower, who was still Director, recommended that the voluntary evacuation be stopped and that plans be made for carrying out the evacuation on a step-by-step basis.

The history which led up to the evacuation is a bit complex and I'll not try to cover it here except to say at that time Earl Warren was Attorney General of California but looking forward to being candidate for governor in the fall of 1942 which he was and he favored the evacuation. General DeWitt had brought onto his staff on the West Coast Colonel Carl Bendetsen who was in charge of his civilian affairs and while some people feel that Bendetsen had little responsibility for recommending the evacuation I do not agree. I think that he was a prime mover in recommending to General DeWitt that he carry out the evacuation. As a matter of fact after the evacuation order was issued here on the mainland he tried for weeks to get a large group of people evacuated from Hawaii with the idea I am sure of justifying their West Coast evacuation. One of the people who touched off the campaign for the evacuation was a radio commentator by the name of John B. Hughes who recommended in late January that an evacuation be carried out.

Much to the surprise of many of us when we checked the history we learned that Walter Lippmann went out



to the coast and spent several days in early February and he was evidently taken in by General DeWitt. He recommended evacuation. He repeated some of the same phony philosophy as to the reasons for the evacuation in one of his columns. The major thing that he ended up with was the fact that General DeWitt had said and he repeated this "the fact that there had been no problem up till then was the best indication in the world that there would be because they were just waiting for the right time."

So on February 19, 1942 the President issued an Executive Order which authorized Secretary of War Stimson or any commander designated by him to establish military areas and to exclude therefrom any and all persons who they felt might be inimical to the war effort. Following this Executive Order the first proclamation that was issued by General DeWitt under this authority was on March 2, 1942. On March 11, 1942 he established the WCCA which was the civilian affairs unit of his organization that I have already mentioned under Colonel Carl Bendetsen and on June 2 proclamation number six announced no further voluntary movement from California and plans for eventual total evacuation was announced. This was just two weeks before I took over the job on June 17th.

#### Agricultural Labor - The First Relocation Move

DSM: During the month of May the pressures for agricultural labor were so heavy that authorization was provided both by the Western Defense Command and by the WRA for the recruiting of labor in the centers under certain very strict conditions. These rules provided that they had to have the statements by the Governors of the various states and by the law enforcement officials that they would enforce the law and see that there were no problems in the way of retribution against people of Japanese ancestry and a number of other very closely written restrictions which had to





do with their staying within certain limited area.

### Student Relocation Committee

DSM: Along about the same time there were a number of students in the universities on the West Coast who wanted to continue their studies so Milton Eisenhower asked Clarence Pickett of the American Friends Service Committee to form a committee to propose and initiate plans for a student relocation program.

The committee was appointed and when I arrived on the scene on June 17th there already were plans under way for checking with colleges outside of the evacuated zone to see which among the various colleges and universities were in position to accept students and at the same time for making a survey, on the West Coast, of the students who were in college there to see who among those wished to relocate into other institutions. This work was carried out largely through the summer of 1942 and a very excellent job was done.

The main handicap that the committee had was the fact that many of the universities had defense contracts and they were fearful that the Defense Department would object to their taking evacuee students at that time so that there were some of the institutions who didn't go along with the plan who otherwise might have done so.

### First Steps Toward A General Relocation Policy

DSM: During the first week of my incumbency we held our first staff conference and I met the people among





our key staff whom I had not met previously. Among others was Tom Holland who had just returned from a trip to the West Coast and who had visited some of the Army's assembly centers and one or two of the new relocation centers that had been established. When I called on him for a report on his trip he made one of the most articulate and most moving statements that I think I have ever heard made in a staff meeting. He strongly favored a policy of relocation and the doing away with centers altogether as quickly as possible. I was very much struck by his presentation and by his arguments.

Almost immediately after this meeting was over I started on a trip to the West Coast with three or four of the key staff members at which time I visited the Tule Lake and Poston Relocation Centers and the area office in San Francisco. When I came back I announced to the staff that I was in full agreement with Tom Holland's recommendations. I wanted immediately to proceed with plans for a relocation program. So plans were written up, very cautious ones I might say, to allow relocation outside of the centers under certain conditions.

Among other things the plan was limited to Nisei. Kibei (who were Nisei who had spent a good deal of their time in Japan and had most of their education there) were not included in the group who could relocate. Issei were not included in this first statement.

HP: This was relocation from the centers?

DSM: That's right. This involved relocation from the relocation centers into the hinterland to accept jobs wherever they could be found. This policy became effective July 20, 1942.

Following this we immediately went to work on a more comprehensive program and regulations for which we were able to issue in late September and it became effective October 1, 1942. It made provision for relocation from the relocation centers into the normal communities outside of the evacuated area. I have mentioned the terms Issei, Nisei and Kibei. Nisei are



first-generation Japanese Americans who are American citizens because they were born on American soil. Kibei were also born on American soil but these were Nisei who had gone back to Japan for much of their education and as a consequence some of them were really more Japanese in their culture than they were American. The Issei were the first generation folks who immigrated from Japan to the United States and who were the parents of the Nisei and the Kibei. They were aliens and continued to be aliens until the 1950's because the laws up until that time did not allow naturalization of Orientals. The only exception to that was a few cases where Issei had participated in World War I and were later given their citizenship by a special act of Congress.

In 1954 the immigration laws were revamped so that it set up a quota, not only for Japanese but for the so called Asiatic triangle and authorized the naturalization of people from that area and which opened the way for the Issei who had been in this country throughout many years to apply for American citizenship. Many of them had lived here since 1900 or 1910 both here and in Hawaii. The majority of them did apply except for those who were so old that they didn't feel that it was worth going to the trouble.

#### The Army Assembly Centers

DSM: After General DeWitt issued his proclamation which provided for no further voluntary evacuations and set up a general schedule for the evacuation of the rest of the territory, the evacuees were moved into army assembly centers which were hastily provided. These were mostly in racetracks up and down the West Coast. Many of these people lived in these temporary assembly centers run by the Army throughout the summer and fall of 1942 while relocation centers were being constructed by the army engineers.



HP: Did they use tents?

DSM: No, they used the barns, put in partitions and they used the grandstand. Kitchens and other service facilities were underneath the grandstand. The Nisei still talk about the smell of horse manure that they lived with during those months.

### The Move To Relocation Centers

DSM: The first relocation center was Manzanar which was originally an assembly center which was constructed by the Army. It was turned over to WRA on June 1, 1942. The other center which was in the early stages of construction and use was the one at Poston near Parker, Arizona, which was constructed on an Indian reservation. Poston turned out to be the largest center we had with three different units -- Poston I, II and III. The other centers were brought into use as they were partially or wholly completed. The last of the evacuees were moved into the Rhower center in Arkansas in November 1942.

We had real problems during this period of movement from the assembly centers because once the army set up dates for movement which was carried out through the use of trains and buses they moved on the scheduled dates in spite of hell or high water, regardless of whether or not the centers were ready for the evacuees. As a consequence we had very many situations where centers were not complete and where there was a great deal of misery and inconvenience as a result of having not been able to complete the centers in time to receive the people as they should have been received.

HP: How many people were involved in this?

DSM: 110,000 people were moved to begin with. During the four year period we dealt with a total of 120,000





people. Some of them came in from other parts of the country where they had voluntarily relocated and added to our group who were evacuated in the first instance and then a lot of babies were born during the four years of the relocation centers; it happened that the births outstripped the deaths during that period. Our good health facilities in the centers helped many people to extend their life span. I am sure they might not have lived so long if they had not had the kind of medical service that we were able to provide.

#### The Policy Conference And Its Importance

DSM: Up until August of 1942 no general policy had been issued regarding the operation of centers. On August 13th we convened the directors of centers who had already been selected and our key staff members from some of these centers plus our key staff members from Washington at a meeting in San Francisco which was known as a policy session. During the several days following August 13th we hammered out policy after policy affecting the operations of relocation centers. This was essential because we had absolutely no precedent on which to operate.

These policies concerned the various phases of life in the centers. The matter of food and mess halls and how they would be operated, and type of food and the costs and so on had to be spelled out. The areas of education, policing, religious worship, the matter of whether or not we were going to have farming operations to provide food wherever it was feasible and so on. It went into all phases of life in the center at that time.

As fast as these policies were shaped up they were issued one by one over a period from about the 20th of August through the middle of September. This was a very important matter. The reason being that by the time we had arrived at this stage much to our



surprise the people on the West Coast who had helped to pressure General DeWitt and others into carrying out an evacuation were again on the prowl and they were out sniping at everything that was going on in the centers. They were claiming that the evacuees were getting better meats than the men in the Army were getting and all kinds of crazy stories were being put out in the Hearst press and in other ways to harrass the evacuees and WRA.

#### The Dies Committee Moved In

DSM: It wasn't long after the policies were formulated that the Dies Committee of the U.S. Congress set up a sub-committee headed by John Costello. They sent investigators, so called, into five or six of the centers to check on our policies and I requested the Directors to be sure to take a transcript of all of the testimony that was given to them so that I could see what was happening.

You can imagine my relief when I found that the Directors had learned their lesson and that they all told the same story; they had read the policy statements and they just clicked right down the line. I heaved a great big sigh of relief and said "Thank God we have the policies and have the people who had the good sense to know that it was important to follow the policies" because had they found that we were not consistent and playing it by ear we would have been in more trouble than we were. We were in trouble enough as it was.



### The Posten And Manzanar Troubles

DSM: Our first real trouble spot developed in Camp I of the Posten Relocation Center on November 14, 1942 when we had a community-wide strike and demonstration, which was called by the Hearst press and others a riot which it wasn't. This came about because the F.B.I. had come into the center and had arrested two or three people and they were put into jail and the community got up in arms and demanded that they be released and when they weren't released immediately they went on strike and consequently nothing was done for about a week or ten days except to provide the basic food and essential services required by the evacuees.

This had hardly settled down when we had a incident at Manzanar on December 6, 1942 and this was known pretty much as the Kibei rebellion. A group of Kibei and a group of people who were running the kitchens were involved. The chefs who had organized themselves into a kitchen workers union began to demand things. Here again this incident came about because there some arrests were made in the center and these people who were arrested were taken out to Independence or one of the nearby towns.

This group demanded that they be brought back to the center and that they be released to the people in the center. As a result of discussions that Ralph Merritt, the director of the project, had had with the leaders of the group he thought they had arrived at a meeting of the minds and a compromise but he found out an hour or two later that the leader had simply announced another meeting later in the day. When he found that they had broken their word and were meeting again he called in the Army which he had authority to do. Unfortunately, after the Army came in some youngster climbed into a car and released the brakes and ran it right down toward the soldiers and some trigger-happy boy started shooting. Some people were wounded and three people ultimately died as a result of the shooting.





This was a period of my greatest anxiety. The month of December was a horrendous month. I didn't know what was going to happen in the other centers and whether this was a pattern that was going to develop in center after center which some people were predicting. Furthermore we had not followed the recommendations of the Army when they turned the evacuees over to us to hire forty to fifty police at each of the centers from the outside because we did not feel that it was necessary.

We had adopted the policy of having one police chief who we appointed and then the rest of the policing was done by the evacuees themselves who were hired to do a job, just as they were hired to do other jobs in the center. So we didn't know at this stage whether we had been wrong. This is the one period when I remember quite clearly that I didn't sleep every night as I had promised Milton Eisenhower to do.

Finally I came down to the office one morning and decided that we were going to do something although I didn't know what! I asked Elmer Rowalt to fill his pocket up with cigars which he liked to smoke and to come into my office and close the door -- that we would probably spend the morning together and we were going to talk the whole thing over and through and come out with some decisions.

#### A Second Policy Conference

DSM: We decided that the first thing that we would do would be to call a meeting in early January 1943 of all the project directors and the key personnel again and review our policies which had already been issued and see whether any changes should be made. We made practically no changes as a result of this but it was something to be done and we did it.





We did authorize the hiring of not more than two additional assistants to the police chief in each of the centers. Some of them hired them and some of them didn't. We decided to approve the election of Issei to the centers councils. Even though this action doesn't seem to be very much, we did review our other policies and decided that they were sound and that we would sit tight.

In November of 1942 we decided to eliminate the three regional offices that had been established and to move the responsibilities that they had carried into the Washington office except for some liaison people in one or two operations including an evacuee property office on the West Coast. This was done between November 15, 1942 and the first of January 1943.

#### Relocation Field Offices Established

DSM: About the same time we decided to go all out on a relocation program outside of the relocation centers. On January 4, 1943 the first two relocation field offices, called area field offices, were established to assist in helping people to relocate outside of the centers through finding jobs, housing and assuring them the opportunity to live peaceably and to carry on as other civilians would carry on.

From this start we established field offices in key cities all over the United States. Before 1943 was out we had seven other offices making a total of nine by the time we had completed that earlier setup.



### A Senate Sub-Committee Holds Hearings

DSM: On January 20, 1943 Senator A. B. Chandler, who had been named Chairman of a sub-committee of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, started hearings on a bill which was introduced by Senator Mon Wallgren of Washington to transfer the W.R.A. functions to the War Department. This bill had been proposed some weeks earlier by the American Legion, who were poorly informed. They claimed that we were relocating people out of the centers in which they were supposed to be kept throughout the war period, and that it was likely that we were introducing saboteurs all over the country.

### The 442nd Regimental Combat Team Was Launched

DSM: Fortunately on January 28, 1943 before the hearings were ended, Secretary Stimson announced that a regimental combat team composed of volunteers of Japanese Americans from the mainland and Hawaii was to be organized. I had been pressing for this during all the months that I had been in office as director, and it happened to come at a very opportune time from the standpoint of the hearings that we were having on Capitol Hill.

Following this, beginning on February 8, 1943, we started in cooperation with the Army a registration of all people who were eligible for army enlistment and we also added provisions for leave clearance from the centers for all people over fifteen years of age including the Issei.

This led to some difficulties because some of the questions were poorly worded. The worst one for example was "Do you swear to be a loyal citizen of the United States, etc.?" Of course the Issei could



not be citizens of the United States, never had been, and were not allowed to be. They couldn't answer this question. So after this was pointed out the question was changed so that all except a very small percentage were able to answer it because it simply said "Will you do nothing to interfere with the war effort of the United States?" I don't remember the exact details but that was the essence of the question.

### Baseless Rumors

HP: Getting back to the allegation by the American Legion that some of the people released from the centers to take jobs elsewhere were guilty of sabotage. Was there ever an established case that a person from a relocation center had become a saboteur?

DSM: No, there never was an established case of sabotage. Not only as regards the people who had been in relocation centers who had lived on the West Coast but it also included Hawaii, which had more people of Japanese ancestry than we had in the United States mainland. There were lots of rumors about sabotage but none of them proved to be true. It took a long time to eliminate those rumors. Many people were still quoting them weeks and weeks after they had been knocked down by J. Edgar Hoover and others who had made the investigation.

I had one rather embarrassing situation in my own home. One Sunday afternoon we had some friends who had dropped by and among them was an Admiral of the Navy who had been a neighbor of ours for years and during the course of the conversation they got onto the question of the evacuees and the Admiral said, "Well, you know that one of the Japanese who was shot down during the attack on Pearl Harbour -- a member of the Japanese Air Force -- was wearing a high school ring from Hawaii." I said "Yes, I know about that" and then I hesitated because here I was





host to a whole room full of people but I finally said "George, I do know about that and we have checked that out thoroughly and it isn't true. Our source of information on this is the Office of Naval Intelligence." He said "Well of course they should know." I said "Yes. I think they probably are better informed than most anybody," and we passed over it. Fortunately we continued to be good friends but it was a very tough spot to be in. This was typical of what was going on in those days.

Our Letter To Secretary Stimson Recommending A Change  
In The Exclusion Order

DSM: On March 11, 1943 we sent a long detailed letter to Secretary Stimson of the War Department recommending immediate relaxation of the West Coast exclusion orders. This was just about one year from the time that the evacuation orders were issued. In view of the fact that it was quite obvious that there was very little danger, if any, of invasion of the West Coast, we thought there was no justification for continuing the exclusion order. We proposed two alternate plans. One of them was all-out lifting of the exclusion order to allow people to return to their West Coast homes; the other was a step-by-step proposal whereby people who had been in the Army and their immediate relatives might be allowed to go back. We presented a long list of reasons.

On May 10th, two months later, we received a reply to this letter rejecting our proposals and urging a segregation program to separate the so-called pro-Japanese from the people who were in support of the American effort in the relocation centers and to set up a special center for those who wanted to be Japanese and wanted to return to Japan. As a matter of fact this had been urged by General DeWitt from the beginning. We had hardly taken over the first centers before he began to argue for this. We pointed



out to Secretary Stimson that had this been a feasible move and was as easy as suggested by General DeWitt it should have been done during the assembly center period and we should never have had the problem to face later, but this didn't stop them. They kept right on pressuring for the segregation program.

As a matter of fact Assistant Secretary McCloy went before the Chandler sub-committee and made recommendations urging the separating of the so-called disloyal from the others residents of the center. The pressure finally got so heavy that we decided that we had to go ahead with the segregation program.

So on the last of May 1943 we made a decision to use the Tule Lake center as the place to which to move people who wanted to be pro-Japanese and others who we felt should be separated. As a consequence we offered the opportunity for people who wanted to move out of Tule Lake to go to other centers previous to moving people in. This process took all summer and most of the fall. It was terrific job and led to real difficulties which I shall mention later.

#### Mrs. Roosevelt's Visit To Gila River And A Luncheon

DSM: In the meantime on May 6, 1943 Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt visited the Gila River Relocation Center in Arizona at the request of the President. I met Mrs. Roosevelt in Pheonix and escorted her to the center. We spent the day at the Center and she with her wonderful energy, covered everything in the center of any importance including all the wards in the hospitals, the schools, and all phases of the service activities so that she could report back to the President. On the way back to Pheonix we were discussing some of our problems and I decided that I would try a bold stroke so I told her that I would like to talk to the President about some of our problems that we were facing at the time. She said "I think you should and I shall arrange it," and she did arrange it.



On May 23, 1943 Mrs. Myer and I were invited to the White House for luncheon. It was one of those beautiful bright spring days and they decided to have the luncheon on the lawn where small tables were set up. We spent a hour and a half at lunch. At our table in addition to Mrs. Myer and myself was the President and the President's daughter Anna Roosevelt Boettenger from the state of Washington, who with her husband, was running one of the Hearst papers at that time. At another table was Harry Hopkins and his wife, Mrs. Roosevelt and John Boettenger. They were far enough away that they didn't interfere with our discussions.

The President and I had an excellent discussion about the problems and when I told the President about the "Happy" Chandler committee and the fact that I felt that they were doing things that were not very helpful he said "I think I can help you with this." I didn't know for some time just how he had done it but I found out later that he had gotten in touch with Senator Joseph O'Mahoney who was a good supporter of the administration. I later learned that Joe O'Mahoney called "Happy" Chandler into his office and dressed him down and told him that he should lay off and quit harrassing the W.R.A. He did. As a result we got quite a satisfactory report out of his committee. It was very much in line with what we had proposed to do anyhow in the way of segregation and other problems.

In the meantime, also during the month of May, the Dies Committee, which I have mentioned earlier, started their investigators to work in the various centers. On May 12 they arrived at Manzanar unannounced and they visited four or five other centers in sequence. This is the group that I mentioned in dealing with whom we had asked the directors of the centers to take transcripts of the answers to their questions. Our directors knew their stuff and knew what the policies were and they all gave the same basic answers in their replies. This showed how important these policy statements were and how important it was that they were being followed.





### The Dies Sub-Committee At Work

DSM:       The Costello sub-committee of the Dies Committee was appointed on June 3, 1943 and they became a real harrassing element over the period from May until July 6th. They held so-called hearings in Los Angeles, to which we were not invited. One or two of the people from Posten were invited but the people who were testifying out there were mostly people whom we had fired because of the fact that they had either not been loyal to the service or who had left the center during the Posten incident.

          In one case a chap by the name of Townsend who testified had left the center in a government car because he was scared to death, and was gone for a week. When he came back fortunately the director of the center had had enough experience that he sat him down and interviewed him with a stenographic transcript of the interview and of course fired him.

          This ex-employee told all kinds of wild stories at the time of the Los Angeles hearings which were fed out to the newspapers across the land and we had no chance for rebuttal at that time. I never shall forget that during those weeks from May through until July morning after morning after morning my information staff John Baker and Morrill Tozier and I met to review what had been in the papers the day before. Day after day one of us would get so made by the time we were through reviewing that we were recommending that we go out to kill the Dies Committee! Usually the other two kept calm enough so that they had good enough sense that we finally settled down and decided that we would document every bit of misinformation and information that was put out by the committee in such a way that we would have it on paper.

          We did just that so that by the time we got our hearing in Washington on July 6, 1943 which was an open hearing with the press present we had stacks of mimeographed documents which we carried up by the arm load and piled up on the table.





Every time a question came up we gave a handout to the press, and during this particular hearing we made the statement that Mr. Townsend, whom I mentioned earlier had left the center in a government car and was gone for a week and who had told so many wild stories, had told forty-two lies or had made forty-two misstatements during his hearing in Los Angeles. This was during the morning session.

When the afternoon session opened John Costello the committee chairman leaned forward and said "Mr. Myer, we have reviewed the Townsend statement during the noon hour and we can only find thirty-nine mis-statements." I got up and bowed and said "Mr. Chairman we accept thirty-nine," and of course we got a real laugh out of the newsmen and a real break out of it.

As a result of those hearings which lasted three days we got some real support from the good people around the United States who began really to roll up their sleeves and go to work to help us in our relocation program and in our program generally. The church people and many others who had representatives sitting in on the hearing sent out the word and informed people about it so that it turned out, this committee did us a favor rather than doing us harm in the long run.

Their harrassment of W.R.A. made the good people around the country mad enough that they decided to really go to work and do something about it.

While all of this was happening during the early part of 1943 we were intensifying our program to do a relocation job outside of the centers. We were getting our area offices established, as well as local district offices, and by the end of 1943 our program of relocation was very well under way.

On October 11, 1943 the last group of evacuees, from other centers who were being moved to the Tule Lake Center as so-called "segregatees" except those at Manzanar, had been transferred to Tule Lake. The transfer of people out of Tule Lake who had been willing to move to other centers had also been completed.



### The Tule Lake Incident And Resulting Turmoil

DSM: In late October Tule Lake workers were going out to the farm on a truck; and the truck had upset. As a result one of the workers was killed in the accident. This led to a farm strike and turmoil really began to develop in the Tule Lake Center on November 1.

I visited the center at which time a demonstration was staged for the benefit of the National Director. I arrived on the morning of November 1 and Ray Best, who was the project director, had arranged to meet with some of the evacuee committee on the following day but they had decided that they would meet the day of my arrival. During the noon hour I had eaten in one of the mess halls and Ray had eaten dinner at his own home. He came down to where I was after lunch and said that he had just received word that an announcement had been made in all of the mess halls that there was to be a meeting at the administration building and that everybody was to gather there.

So he and I immediately got into his car and drove all over the center to see what was happening and we realized that those in charge at that time, among the evacuees, had not only urged everybody to come but that they were putting pressure on them to come, and we saw people going all across the center in their best bib and tucker, elderly ladies and elderly men, people with youngsters by the hand and so on. We discussed the situation and we agreed that there was not anything very serious going to happen except talk, in view of the fact that they would not have had all of these women and youngsters in the crowd if there was anything that they planned to do other than talk. So when we got back to the office here was the committee and they asked for a meeting and we agreed to have one.

The meeting went on for two hours and a half and they made the same requests of me as they had made to Ray Best earlier, including the firing of the project director, four or five of the other key people on the staff and a number of other things which I shall not



try to relate at this stage. I told them that I would not make any promises under pressure of this type and it wasn't the way we planned to do business and as soon as the people from Manzanar arrived at the center later we had planned to arrange for a meeting of the evacuees where they could select their own representatives. I told them that I had some question whether the people in the room at that time were really representatives of the people as a whole.

After we had met for a couple of hours the chairman of the group asked if I would speak to the crowd and I said I would be very happy too. So I very briefly told the crowd what I had told the committee. The chairman then made a speech in Japanese and the crowd broke up.

In the meantime during the meeting there was a report that came to us that the doctor in charge of the hospital had been assaulted and that there had been a fight between the doctor and some of the evacuees. We sent the police chief over to check on it. He came back and said that it was true, that they had assaulted the head of the hospital.

HP: The doctor was non-Nisei?

DSM: Not a Nisei. He was a doctor that we had hired from the outside and who was a bit crusty. They didn't particularly like him and some of the boys who had a grudge used this opportunity, when every one was occupied, to do their job. The doctor had gotten skinned up a bit but nothing very serious so we went ahead with our meeting.

HP: How many people were assembled?

DSM: I would guess that there were must have been maybe 10,000 or 15,000 people gathered around the administration building because everybody was asked to come or they were pressured into coming. They were herded in there by some stooges of the committee who were acting as strong arm men to get everybody in.

HP: Where there amplifiers in those days?





DSM: Yes. They had set up an amplifier on the roof of the building. Somebody had a loud speaker outfit and they set it up which we didn't object to.

HP: Did you feel that your life was in danger?

DSM: Not at all. At no stage in the game did I feel that I was in danger.

HP: You might have been, you know.

DSM: Oh, I suppose, but there was no indication of that. My experience with the Japanese people generally was that even though they had some hard boiled people in this group they were under pretty good control.

As we came out of the office after the meeting had been adjourned I looked up at the flag pole and said "Old Glory still flies." I mention this because one of the Hearst reporters among other things had said that they had torn down the American flag and tramped on it, which of course was not true. As a result of this affair many of the people on the staff left the center and people who were in the center as service people who had come in to bring in supplies and so on had left the center and told some very wild stories about what was going on.

Telephone communication with the outside was very poor. It was through the Tule Lake exchange which was a small town and we tried to get our San Francisco office and couldn't reach them and we tried to get some of the newsmen who had arranged for me to meet with the press club group in San Francisco the night before and I wasn't able to reach the chairman of that group who had been my host.

We did our best to get the word out and to deny the wild stories put out by the Hearst press and some of the others. One paper reported that plans were made for setting fires all over the center along with other bits of misinformation.

Unfortunately, the reports officer at Tule Lake had resigned before I arrived which I did not know. While he was still on the project he did absolutely



nothing to gather the information which he had normally been responsible for. He was the chap who should have had all the facts about what had gone on and should have been calling the newspapers to report it. Instead of that we had to do our own reporting. Robert Cozzens was with me and we did our best to get in contact with news people but it was impossible to reach many of them. As a consequence most of these fables which were passed out by people who left the center went unanswered until the 14th of November which was nearly two weeks later. I left the project after my second day there and went on about my business including a trip to Portland and to Seattle.

I learned three days later while I was in route back to Washington by train that I was supposed to call the project, which I did en route. I found that on the night of November 4th there was an outbreak of violence at Tule Lake because of an attempt to stop the movement of trucks which were taking food out to the farm laborers who had come in from the other centers to help harvest the crops. The civilian police that we had at the center tried to break up the group but it ended up in quite a melee. So Ray Best finally called in the military and they took over which was in line with our agreement that if they were brought in they were to be in control. They were there until January 1944.

In view of the fact that all of these fantastic stories and charges had been fed out and published in the newspapers we felt it highly important that they be cleared up as fast as possible, but after the military took over on the night of November 4th they allowed no newspaper men into the center and gave no interviews. As a consequence some of my very good friends among the reporters felt that we were holding out on them. They did not understand the arrangement. It led to a very, very bad situation.

When I got back to Washington on about November 6th or 7th, I learned that our head information man Morrill Tozier and Leland Barrows, who was acting in charge, were seriously worried because of the fact that they couldn't get any report either out of Tule Lake or from me. Of course the problem was that there



had been so many charges, so many things misstated that it took days to get the facts together. Finally on November 14, ten days after the incident on November 4 we were able to put out a release. We had a meeting at the Office of the War Information and the release issued was based upon very careful checking on all the things that were said and done. This however did not allay the criticism. It continued because the Tule Lake incident was just the kind of thing that the American Legion and the Hearst Press and all of the people who had been harassing the evacuees and the WRA were looking for in order to keep things stirred up.

As a result of this incident and all of the misinformation that flowed out from Tule Lake, the period from November 1, 1943 to January 20, 1944 marked the lowest point in our public relations, especially on the West Coast.

#### A Date With The American Legion

DSM: Fortunately during November I had a date set up to meet with the state commanders and the state adjutants of the American Legion at Indianapolis. This came at a very good time because the American Legion was one of our real problems. Homer Chaillaux who was head of the Americanism Committee had been practically forced into arranging this meeting. As a result I had an opportunity to meet with a group of people who needed to hear the facts straight. This was a very rewarding meeting for me because I was able to get some of the facts on the record and get them straight and we had a very tough question and answer period with the representative of the California Legion leading the way and being very snide. We got through the session in good order.

It happened that we were meeting in a hall with a hallway along the side so that there were several





doors out to this hallway. When the meeting broke up I started for the men's room; it had been a long session; Dick Russell, the Senator from Georgia, had been the speaker after I was on. It took me about twenty minutes to reach my destination for the reason that people were popping out of each one of those doors and grabbing me by the hand and shaking my hand and saying "By God mister you did a good job." I got back to the men's room and as I opened the door and some chap just stepped out of a booth, saw me come in and said "By God mister I was glad to see you give it to those sons of bitches." Everybody in the men's room said "It was wonderful."

I might add that after this meeting Mr. Chailloux was much more calm about the W.R.A. and the evacuees than he had been beforehand. I think that I may have already mentioned that one of our men in the information division of W.R.A. had been chairman of the Americanism Committee some years before and he knew some of the people who were on the committee. He was the one that had gone up to New England to meet with a chap by the name of Jimmy O'Neal to get this meeting set up. This was a very fortunate circumstance.

In the meantime, hearings were held again by the Senate Military Affairs Committee of which "Happy" Chandler was sub-committee chairman, and the Costello sub-committee of the Dies committee in the House. These hearings on the Tule Lake affair were calm as compared with the earlier hearings that these people had carried out but they felt that they had to get on the record. I do remember that after we completed the hearings for two or three days on Tule Lake, Mr. Stripling, the Executive Secretary of the Dies Committee, came up to me and shook hands and said "We'll see you after the next blowup in the centers." This is the kind of snide guy that he was. I just said "There ain't going to be no more" and walked out.

I have already mentioned that we had the poorest public relations at that time that we had ever had. I had a real job to clean up the situation particularly in San Francisco.





### A Follow Up Of The Tule Lake Incident

DSM: We made a trip in December or early January particularly with Tule Lake in mind and visited the representative of the New York Times who was the chap who had arranged for me to meet with the press club in San Francisco the night before I went to Tule Lake and who felt very let down because I didn't reach him personally at the time of the Tule Lake crisis to report on what happened. Of course I had tried, but wasn't able to get through. So I had lunch with him and after an hour and a half I at least got him to believe me. He was still feeling low, but we got to be very good friends again after that.

The San Francisco Chronicle had been the most fair of any of the larger West Coast papers, but after this happened they really turned against us. One of the editorial writers wrote an editorial in which he called us stupid, ignorant bureaucrats and all of the names that he could think of that he thought were derogatory.

In the meantime we had arranged for Allen Markley, one of our staff of Washington information men, to go to Tule Lake and to take over the information job. We introduced him to the news people including the Chronicle and some of the other papers and said that he had been instructed to provide any information which the papers requested, to allow them into the center anytime they wished, and to report to them any incident that he thought might be news worthy. This started us back on the right track but it took some weeks to get the job done.

### Reinstitution Of The Draft Of Nisei

DSM: Fortunately on the 20th of January, 1944 Secretary Stimson of the War Department announced the



reinstitution of the draft for Japanese Americans. This had been set aside shortly after the evacuation order had been issued. We had been pressing for some time to get it reestablished because we felt that it was in the interest of the Japanese American group to have their boys drafted like everybody else. The excellent record which was achieved by the 100th battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team between early 1943 and early 1944 helped us to get the War Department to change the orders on the matter of draftees.

A Change In Status - The Move To The Department Of  
The Interior

DSM: As a result of the Tule Lake affair and all the hubbub that grew up following it and the criticism that continued out on the coast, the Attorney General Biddle wrote a memorandum to President Roosevelt and recommended that we be transferred as an agency to the Department of Interior. The first two years of the life of W.R.A. had been one in which we had been responsible to nobody except the President of the United States and I had seen him only once.

Fortunately we had the opportunity to develop our own policies and to defend our own policies without any interference from any source whatsoever, but Attorney General Biddle felt that it was time we had some cover. He felt that Harold Ickes was the man to provide it. When I learned that they expected to transfer us to Interior, I visited Harold Smith of the Budget Bureau, who had sent my name to the President in the first instance, and told him I didn't like it. I thought I would rather go to the Justice Department and gave all the arguments as to why. I might say my real reason was that I thought I could handle Biddle better than I could Harold Ickes. Harold Smith told me to go see Biddle which I did and Biddle told me what he had done and as a matter of fact I think he



showed me a copy of the memorandum. When I went back to Harold Smith and he said "If you want to see someone in the White House you better see Jimmy Byrnes." Well, I saw Jimmy Byrnes and Jimmy Byrnes listened to my story and when I got through he said "I think you had better go to Interior," which we did.

On February 16, 1944 the President issued an executive order transferring the WRA to the Department of Interior. In spite of our reservations it turned out to be a very good move.

### The European Refugees

DSM: In early June 1944 the President announced plans to bring in one thousand European refugees to the United States outside of the immigration quotas and to quarter them in an emergency refugee shelter at Oswego, New York, to be administered by WRA. This was something else that came as a surprise to us because we didn't know until they were ready to announce it to the press that we were to be asked to take care of these refugees.

HP: Who were these refugees?

DSM: These were European refugees that had been gathered up from all over Europe and were in Italy at the time that this was announced.

Evidently the announcement that we were bringing over one thousand was made with the idea of doing something that would be considered at least a token toward doing our share of taking care of refugees because there was pressure on other countries to take care of them.

Out of nine hundred sixty-three of the refugees that came, nine hundred sixteen of them were of Jewish





decent and they came from all across Europe -- Belgium, France, Germany of course, and several other countries. Several of them came from Yugoslavia. Some of them didn't speak anything except Serb or Croat and we had to have a translator or a interpreter that could not only speak German but Serb and Croat and practically all of the other languages of Europe.

The European refugees were sent to Oswego, New York, where we took over an old army post which had been in existence throughout the years. It was one of the posts that helped to provide defenses along the Great Lakes and it hadn't been in use for quite some time but it served our purpose quite satisfactorily, because there was room to provide a hospital and ample room for nine hundred sixty-three refugees, plus provision for staff and for mess halls and other facilities. These people were quite unhappy about being placed in a camp and I couldn't blame them for that. We recommended very strongly when we heard that they were coming that they be absorbed into the population immediately rather than being placed in a camp. But evidently the President and his staff felt that there would be a great deal of criticism if this was done in view of the fact that they were being brought in outside of the immigration laws.

Most of the refugees were people who had never done any kind of physical labor. They were literary people, writers, doctors, professional people of various types, a highly intelligent group of people. They had had to be in order to escape the places they came from and to get by with being refugees as long as they had, because this was 1944 when we got them.

They were an interesting group of people, but they weren't always easy to deal with; they knew how to argue and they would argue at length. They decided, for example, that they were not going to do any menial work such as unloading coal to keep themselves warm. During the summer no problem came up but as fall came on and it began to get chilly we needed heat and it had been our general policy throughout, and we had made this stick with the other centers, that the evacuees who ever they were would have to unload the coal and see to it that it was delivered to the proper places



and to organize groups to do it. Well they weren't going to do it. So they went on strike and the director of the camp called me up and wanted to know what to do about it and I said "Well, if they want to be cold, why we will have to let them be cold. This is awfully hard hearted and I can understand something of the reaction of these people, but I am sure that after a day or two they will unload the coal," which they did. They decided to divide it up and to take turns and to organize different crews to take different weeks to get the job done. We had no more trouble after that as far as the coal and other scut work was concerned.

We had a number of problems off and on all through the months between 1944 until December 1945. This is the period in which the refugees were in camp with no opportunity to get out except that they were free to go into the town of Oswego. The farmers thereabouts wanted some help and some of the refugees were willing to go out to pick fruit and that sort of thing. Generally speaking, however, they stayed within the general environment of the camp.

In Washington throughout all the weeks and months that they were in camp, we were busy trying to get an order which would allow us to help these people integrate into the pattern of the United States generally and to leave the camp.

HP: Was there much illness from their years of deprivation?

DSM: Very little. The health problem was quite easily handled because we sent one of our doctors that had been in the centers up there as head physician. He had enough skilled help among this group to handle the problem very well so we had very little health problem except the normal sort of thing that you will get in any population this size. It was very well taken care of.

HP: What was done about schooling?

DSM: Fortunately the schools of Oswego allowed the children to come into their schools. Many of them, of course,



didn't speak English well but fortunately the schools had a good superintendent and a good principal who got into the spirit of the thing. These youngsters really proved to be an interesting group of people among the other youngsters because of their experiences. They had had good schooling, and during the several months that they were there the refugee kids had a wonderful opportunity in their association with these other kids to learn English which they did.

HP: Was it dormitory life for the families?

DSM: For the most part, yes. Although it was a little different than it was in the other centers because there was much more room. We could allot much more space and they could work out their apartment space much better because we did have more room.

HP: Did it ever increase from the nine hundred sixty-three?

DSM: No. This was it, and we didn't receive any more.

HP: What became of them? Did they return to Europe?

DSM: Well, finally President Truman decided that it was time to do something about it and on December 22, 1945 he issued an order allowing them admission into the United States. What we had to do was to arrange for them to go to Canada and come back in in order to have status. I believe that only about seventy-five or eighty went back to Europe, most of them to Yugoslavia. The rest of them were relocated by the Jewish agencies which were so helpful to us during this time. All we had to do was to take them to the gate and they saw to it that they got to Canada and back to the United States. The Jewish agencies then found places for them to live in the United States.

After the people from Oswego were allowed to go to Canada and come in and apply for American citizenship, we had very little contact with most of them. We did get reports from time to time as to how they were adjusting. Many of them went to New York City because they had friends there or because of the fact that there was a large Jewish population and they felt





more at home. Some of them went to Minneapolis and to a number of other cities throughout the country where arrangements had been made by the organizations for them to be accepted. They integrated very well, having little difficulty as far as being accepted in the United States and I think most of them were happier here than they would have been if they had gone back to Europe.

A young man, Freddie Baum, who served as our interpreter and whom I have kept in touch with off and on throughout the years, has been most successful. He offered his services and they were accepted by the Army for a time as interpreter and he spent some time in Europe, but he is now in New York and quite well situated.

### Back To The Problem Of Japanese Americans

DSM: Back now to the main stream of the W.R.A. program, the handling of the Japanese Americans who were located in relocation centers and those who had relocated throughout the country.

One of the worse pieces of legislation ever passed by the United States Congress was passed on June 30th of 1944. This provided that American citizens could renounce their American citizenship while on American soil if the renunciation was approved by the Attorney General. This bill was slipped over as far as W.R.A. was concerned. We weren't even called for a hearing when the bill was up. I learned later that the Attorney General was misled. Edward Ennis who was our very good friend and was in charge of the Alien Division in the Department of Justice unfortunately was pre-occupied with some question that somebody had whispered to him when the chairman of the committee asked the Attorney General if he favored the bill and a chap by the name of M'Grannery who had been a Congressman and





who had been moved down to the Justice Department because he had lost his election and was serving as Congressional contact man leaned over and urged the Attorney General Biddle to say yes and he did. The bill was passed. The President signed it on July 1, 1944 and this is the bill that led some five thousand four hundred evacuees to renounce their American citizenship, frequently under pressure. Most of them were at Tule Lake but fortunately only a few hundred of them returned to Japan. The rest in a series of court tests over a period of years regained their American citizenship. I think only about four hundred did not and some of that group went to Japan. The great majority of them did regain their American citizenship. Some of them by court action and later I think by the action of the Attorney General in 1959 which cleaned up the whole mess. It was a mess and it was most unfortunate.

### The First Closing Of A Relocation Center

DSM: On June 30, 1944 we announced the closing of the first of the relocation centers at Jerome, Arkansas. This was one of our smaller centers and one of the last ones to be opened. Our program had gone well enough that we felt that we could distribute the people in Jerome quite satisfactorily into other centers and get along without this particular center.

We had recommended in March 1943 that the War Department either lift the evacuation order and allow people to go back to the West Coast or at least to do it in part, but we were unsuccessful in getting the order lifted during 1943 and early 1944. We did get some relaxation during the summer of 1944 when families of veterans of the 442nd and some other were allowed quietly to go back to the West Coast without any announcement.



The Lifting Of The Exclusion Orders

DSM: Finally on December 17, 1944 the War Department after a long battle of more than twenty months announced the revocation of the West Coast mass exclusion order to be effective January 2, 1945.

HP: Yet the war was still on. How did it happen that these people were acceptable to the West Coast?

DSM: Well, we knew that these people would be generally acceptable on the part of the population on the West Coast. Our big problem was with certain people in the military who I suppose had a problem of saving face. Even after the announcement was made on December 17, General Wilbur who was in charge of civilian activities on the West Coast held up about ten thousand evacuees whom they said they had to check out very carefully before they would allow them to return. This interfered with our general relocation program.

It is true that the Japanese war was not over and wasn't ended until August and as a matter of fact the Peace wasn't signed until early September of 1945. We had pressed very hard over the twenty months that I have mentioned from March 1943 until the time when the evacuation order was finally lifted to get the opportunity for these people to return before the war was over because we felt that the competition for housing and jobs as well as the competition in many other things would be very difficult when the war was over and soldiers began to come back in very large numbers. As it worked out it happened that we were already a bit late because the biggest battle we had in getting people relocated on the coast who wanted to go back was to find housing for them.



### Final Relocation Problems

DSM: Rex Lee, my relocation officer out of the Washington office spent weeks and months on the West Coast and the biggest part of his job was digging up temporary housing and finding arrangements where people could live until they could find housing of their own, simply because many of the soldiers' families and others had begun to flock into California toward the end of the war. California had a boom period at the end of World War II. It started before the war was over and has continued ever since.

Some of the evacuees had money and could take care of themselves. We helped some to get jobs. We transferred money to the Social Security Board and they arranged with the California State Welfare people to take care of people who actually had no funds or jobs. So that we had no problem in that respect. The problem was to find places for them to stay. I remember that we had one case that the Los Angeles Times reporters dug up where there was a family of twelve youngsters and because of the State Welfare Department they were paying them at a rate of six thousand dollars a year and they tried to make a big incident out of it because it was coming out of W.R.A. funds. Even at that late stage there was still sniping.

Fortunately we were able to get the evacuees reestablished at home while the war was still on. Another problem was that many of the older people, that is the Issei, among the evacuees, were somewhat fearful about going home, with some good reason because there was still some sniping and some shooting into houses up and down the Central Valley. In any case they claimed that they had been promised that they would be allowed to remain in relocation centers as long as the war was on and there was still a war on with Japan. So it was difficult to get them to move out from the centers.

When the Japanese peace treaty was signed in early September we began to have a big movement and





we were able to keep our schedule for closing centers.

As soon as the announcement came that the order had been lifted we had announced immediately that the relocation centers would all be closed within a year from the time the evacuation order went into effect. We were able to keep that schedule because we set up a schedule in June of 1945 for final closing of all of the centers excepting Tule Lake which was delayed a bit because of the renunciants.

We closed the first ones in September and the last ones were supposed to close by December 1st but we beat the dead line a bit because we finished up two weeks ahead of time. There were some difficulties other than housing and I'll touch on them again a little bit later.

### Supreme Court Decisions

DSM: Very interestingly on the same date that the Army announced that the evacuation order would be lifted on January 2, 1945 the Supreme Court issued a ruling that the evacuation order had been constitutional in the Koromatsu case. In the "Endo" case, which was a case of a young Nisei girl who had asked that she go freely from the centers without signing up of forms or anything of the sort, which we wanted heard long before it was heard, much to our pleasure they, the Supreme Court, held that a loyal American citizen should not be held under any circumstances. This was a ruling that we had been hoping for for months.

The reason why we didn't get it before the Court sooner was because the Solicitor General Charles Fahey had a record that he didn't want to break. He had won every case that he had argued before the Supreme Court and he was sure that he was going to lose this one. We argued with him time and time again and he



finally agreed to take it to the court but the ruling came out the very day the Army lifted their restrictions. Solicitor General Fahey asked us several times to mute the case, but we wanted the backing of the Supreme Court to permit the evacuees to go where they wanted to go at anytime.

### More Final Relocation Problems

DSM: I have mentioned the fact that there were some dastardly things perpetrated to keep people from coming back. On January 8 an attempt was made to dynamite and burn a fruit packing shed owned by a returning evacuee in Placer County, California. This was the first of about thirty incidents involving violence. Most of these consisted of shooting into the homes of returned evacuees between January 8 and about mid-June. They weren't shooting at people. They were using long range rifles, shooting into corners of houses hoping to scare people out and to discourage their return.

HP: Who do you suppose was doing this?

DSM: The people who were doing it were for the most part young farmer lads and others up and down the Central Valley who had either taken over some of the rented land that they didn't want to give up or who didn't want the competition. We pretty well knew who was doing it in some cases.

As a matter of fact, we had one case come up before a Justice of the Peace and he released the boys on probation and Secretary Ickes let out a blast at him that practically blew him out of his job. This was one of the good things that Secretary Ickes did and could do better than anybody else in the world. It helped to calm things a bit.



Between January 10 and January 20, 1945 we established key relocation offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle, and many district offices were established throughout the three states of Washington, Oregon and California to assist returning evacuees in becoming reestablished wherever they wished to go. Most of them went back to their old homes or to their old areas, but not all of them.

All out opposition developed on the part of many evacuees in centers, and many former friends of good will who had supported us throughout the years who objected to closing centers because they were fearful that people were not going to be accepted. They feared that the violence was going to continue and they insisted that we keep at least two or three centers for welfare cases and others.

As a consequence many of these good people joined the race baiters to urge the evacuees to stay put rather than to face the gunfire and the violence plus possible unemployment. However, we had made well established plans for the welfare cases to be taken care of. We had arranged also with the employment services so we had little difficulty in finding employment for people who were not immediately able to get back into their regular line of work. There wasn't much argument about lack of employment because there was still plenty of employment. This was one of the reasons why we wanted to get people back before the war ended. I think I mentioned that in June or July a definite schedule of closing of centers was announced that would take place between September 15 and December 15. The last center was closed out except Tule Lake on December 1.

One of the very wonderful things that happened during the battle to get people accepted back on the Coast was the fact that Captain George Grandstaff who was a Californian and who had fought with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team went home on leave during this period and he became so incensed about what was happening that he wrote the War Department and asked them to allow him to go on speaking tour on behalf of the Japanese Americans throughout California and he did just that.





He not only went on speaking tour and talked to Rotarians and Kiwanis Clubs, but he would also visit the sheriff, and the local officers of places like Placerville and other places where violence had occurred. The tour worked out so well that before it was all over we had about five other young officers who volunteered and we covered the whole state of California with meetings telling of the fine record of Nisei soldiers.

Finally we had the help of a Colonel from the Asiatic front who had been involved with the boys who had gone to language school and who had served as the eyes and ears of the various divisions throughout the battles with the Japanese. When this colonel came and listed some of the wonderful services he cleaned up the opposition pretty fast. He cleared most of the kind of misinformation and the kind of rumors that had been spread around.

After V.J. Day, August 15, 1945, when the Japanese decided to surrender, the Western Defense Command finally issued a proclamation (September 4, 1945) revoking all individual exclusion orders from the evacuated area. This gave us the opportunity to help anyone who wanted to go back to that area to go.

On December 22, 1944 President Truman issued the order which provided the admission of the European refugees to the United States with the prospect of their becoming citizens. As a result of the President's order relating to the refugees at Oswego we were able to close the Oswego center. On February 4, 1946 and on February 23, 1946 the last group of repatriots who were going back to Japan, four hundred thirty-two in number, sailed to Japan from Long Beach, California.

Tule Lake was finally closed on March 20, 1946 after we had arranged for the Justice Department to take some of the evacuees who were aliens and their families into their detention centers. These were people who had not yet been allowed to return to the Coast or who had not yet decided whether they wanted to return to Japan. This gave us the opportunity to







Secretary of the Interior Julius Krug congratulating Dillon Myer upon receipt of the Medal for Merit, 1946. The medal was received as a result of his work during World War II as Director of the War Relocation Authority.

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finish the official life of WRA by June 30.

#### An Award For Work Well Done

DSM: On May 8 the Director of WRA received the Medal for Merit because of the work that the WRA staff had done throughout the war. It hangs on my wall today as something to remind me of the pride we had in doing the best possible job under difficult circumstances.

#### The Wind Up Of WRA In 1946

DSM: On May 15 the last of our field offices were closed. We were able to arrange with local committees throughout the West Coast and other parts of the country where they were needed to help carry on any assistance to the evacuees that they might need and on June 30 we closed our doors as an official agency and called it quits.

One thing that we did was to arrange for a small group mainly of administrative people to continue on for another year to clean up all of the bills and all of the paper work that had to be completed. We also arranged for Robert Cullum, who had been one of our good relocation officers to continue for a year to spend his time getting about and learning how evacuees were getting on and how they were making out in their resettlement areas. He was able to issue a report at the end of the year as a printed report of this phase of the operation.



## CHAPTER X

### A PERIOD OF CHANGE

#### More About My Good Boss Secretary Ickes

DSM: In view of the fact that I have already stated that I was reluctant to go to the Interior Department I think that I should now state that it was a very fortunate thing that the President did decide that we should move to the Interior Department because Secretary Ickes was probably one of the best bosses that I have ever had and I have had several throughout my lifetime.

He wrote a newspaper column after he left the job as Secretary of Interior in which he stated that he had examined the policies of the WRA and found them good, and that he didn't interfere except to let his fists fly occasionally when we needed some help of that type. That was literally true. He supported me on every issue that came up.

Abe Fortas, who was the Under Secretary and who I reported to for the most part, was very helpful although there were certain things that we did not agree upon. Some of the men in the Justice Department felt that Tule Lake should be transferred to them at a stage when we felt that we could handle it better and I had to argue against this and the Secretary fortunately supported my position in the matter. We stuck it out and were able to finish the job better I think than they could have done because they didn't have the background.

Under Secretary Fortas also worried because of the pressures on the part of the goodwill people about





closing out centers, and many of them, as I have already said, would have liked us to have kept on two or three centers to take care of many of the older people who they thought couldn't readjust easily. This finally went to the Secretary. When we were ready to announce our schedule of closing centers the Secretary said "Well, we will hold this question in abeyance until September and if you are still on schedule where you plan to be at that time I think you can go ahead and if not we will review it at that time." Well, when we reviewed the matter around September 1st I think we were only just less than fifty people off the schedule that we had said that we would have relocated by that time and the Secretary said "Go ahead." We had no further trouble about that.

Nevertheless I have appreciated very much the aid and the help that I received from Abe Fortas and from Harold Ickes in particular of all people who I wasn't sure would give us this kind of support.

I had come out of the Department of Agriculture and of course Henry Wallace as Secretary of Agriculture and Harold Ickes had been fighting over the Forest Service and many other things and he wasn't too happy with Agriculture. About the time we were to finish up our job he called me in one day and offered me another job as head of the division of Insular Possessions and in doing so he said "I don't know if you know it or not but when you were transferred over here I was skeptical about you." I grinned at him and said "Mr. Secretary, it was mutual I assure you," and he laughed and we went on about our business.

I turned that job down because I told him that it was too early for me to leave W.R.A. We had gone through the worst of it. We were now ready to finish off and I wanted to see the job through and he understood that.

HP: I wonder how many jobs offers you have had in your career?

DSM: I counted up one time and I had, as I remember it, thirteen or fourteen job offers as I was leaving W.R.A.



HP: It would be interesting to know how many you had during your entire career.

DSM: I don't think I could remember all of them.

After WRA I was offered the job as Chief of the Missouri Valley Reclamation Program, the regional program. Mike Strauss was intent on my taking it but I told them that I didn't believe I wanted to move out of Washington at that stage of the game. So instead the Secretary offered me a job as Assistant Secretary of Interior and my name went to the White House but before it got to Capitol Hill Secretary Ickes went to the Hill and opposed the appointment of Ed Pauley as Secretary of the Navy and did it so violently that the President asked for his resignation and got it. As a consequence my name was not sent to the Hill as Assistant Secretary and I missed the opportunity to be in the junior cabinet.

#### The Offer Of A Governorship Of Puerto Rico

DSM: Finally before I had completely made my decision about what I was going to do I was offered the job of Governor of Puerto Rico and I turned it down. Secretary of Interior Krug had talked to President Truman about it and the President said "Let me talk to him."

So I made a date and went over to see the President and he told me that what they needed down there was an administrator and he hoped that I would take the job. In the meantime I knew that he had lying on his desk a recommendation from Wilson Wyatt that I become the Commissioner of the Public Housing Administration. This was a job which I decided that I would like to take because I found out something about the kind of housing that people had to live in when I was visiting evacuees in Chicago and other places in the slummy parts of these cities. Phil



Klutznick who had been the former commissioner had made the recommendation that I take on the job.

I wasn't at all sure that I wanted to handle the kind of social functions and extra curricular activities that the Governor of Puerto Rico would have to carry out in the way of entertaining and related activities so I turned it down. My wife and family have never been quite happy about this because they thought I should have taken it but I took the housing job instead.

Before going on to other jobs, I want to revert for just a moment to W.R.A. Shortly after the Tule Lake incident I had an invitation to appear before one of the luncheon clubs called the Downtown Club or some such name in Los Angeles and when I arrived on the scene I found a minister who was leading a group of racists and who were sitting right up in the front rows waiting to heckle me, I was sure. I made my speech and of course I told them among other things about the Tule Lake incident and what had happened and some of the reasons why it had happened. During the question and answer period a gentleman got up back in the middle of the room and said "Mr. Director, if the sort of thing that happened at Tule Lake had happened in Japan what do you think the Japanese would have done with the instigators?" I said "They would have shot them, but fortunately we live in a country where we don't believe in shooting people for what we think they are thinking." Well, there were no more questions of that type. From there on we went on an even keel and I as usual enjoyed the meeting. I had had enough heckling in my lifetime that I didn't mind heckling.

### An Interim Interlude

DSM:           After we completed the W.R.A. program on July 1, 1946 there was an interim that needed to be filled in



before I took over the Housing job including getting my name to the Hill and getting it acted on by the Senate. Oscar Chapman had asked me to come over to Interior in the meantime and to hold intra-departmental budget hearings and to make recommendations for the departmental planning program. So on July 1 Philip Glick, Edwin Ferguson, and I along with a representative of the Government Organization Division of the Bureau of the Budget went to work on the budgetary problems of the department and upon recommendations for a departmental planning unit.

This group spent six weeks on these two jobs. I am not sure just how much contribution we made on the budgetary problems but the department did adopt our recommendations for a departmental planning unit which was staffed and I believe is still functioning at the departmental level.

#### A Battle Over Senate Confirmation

DSM: In the meantime Senator Taft of Ohio, which is my home state, became irked presumably because my name was presented to the committee for the job of Commissioner of the Federal Public Housing Authority while he was away in Ohio making a speech. He happened to be a member of the committee before which I was to appear. Consequently Senator Wagner who was chairman proceeded with the hearing one afternoon, reported my name out and by the time Senator Taft got back it was an accepted thing as far as the committee was concerned. Taft was quite obviously sore.

I did get a date to go up and see him but I didn't make much impression on him. He had made up his mind that Truman had tried to slip over something and he was very unhappy. So he objected to my confirmation during that particular session and the Congress adjourned without my being confirmed. So I started an interim appointment on August 16, 1946,





until the following session when my name was presented again to the committee in 1947.

In the meantime Harry P. Cain, who was a new Senator from the state of Washington, was elected to the Senate and Joseph R. McCarthy from Wisconsin was also a new Senator. Both of them were members of the committee before which I was to appear. These two were the only two on the committee who voted against my confirmation.

Before the committee finally acted I received a call from Senator Tobey who became chairman of the committee in the Eightieth Congress. He asked that I come up immediately if possible and when I arrived Senator Harry Cain was talking and Senator Tobey interrupted him to tell me that I had been charged with bad faith because of a previous statement regarding the policy relating to the sale of war housing. As a result Senator Cain and I had a real tough go-round for about a half hour or an hour and following this episode the committee voted to recommend my confirmation without the vote of Cain and McCarthy who voted no.



## CHAPTER XI

## A MOVE TO HOUSING AS COMMISSIONER OF F.P.H.A.

DSM: It was only after starting on the job as Commissioner of Public Housing that I learned that the House Appropriations Committee had assigned Robert E. Lee, now a member of the Federal Communication Commission, as an assistant to investigate the F.P.H.A. This was an important development because this was the first year of the infamous Eightieth Congress which made the kind of record on which President Truman based his campaign in 1948. As it developed I found it necessary to devote much of my time during my year and a half incumbency in the job as Commissioner in defense of the agency and its record during the war years.

By the end of 1946 the appropriations sub-committee on government corporations was beginning to leak bits of the so-called investigative material to the press and finally one of the New York newspapers carried nearly a column and a half of scurrilous trumped up information which had been presumably gleaned by Robert E. Lee and his partner who had been assigned to investigate the housing program.

At that time Congressman Ben Jensen of Iowa was the chairman of the appropriations sub-committee that handled our appropriations hearing and he promised me from time to time that we could see the investigative report when available but he couldn't deliver so we never saw it. The sub-committee was dominated by Walter Ploeser from Missouri, Fredrick Coudert of New York and Jamie Whitten of Mississippi and there never was any question but what this trio and others were out to kill Public Housing.

The Public Housing Agency had the responsibility during the war for the building of all of the temporary, semi-permanent and permanent war housing that was built; for the management of that housing during the



war period; and the continued management and sale of the housing that was supposed to be sold after the war. This gave a great deal of opportunity for sniping and the opportunity was not overlooked.

I had much to learn about the F.P.H.A. organization, the authority of the agency, procedures and policies, before hearings on confirmation and before having hearings before the appropriations committee. There was also many hearings before the Banking and Currency Committee of the House in particular and some before the Finance Committee of the Senate. The House committee on Banking and Currency was headed by Congressman Jesse Wolcott of Michigan. On one or two occasions there were joint hearings before the Banking and Currency Committee and the Appropriations Corporation Sub-committee on housing policies, especially policies in regard to the disposal of war housing. We adopted the procedure of getting a full report from our field staff on every item appearing in the press so that we would be prepared to answer properly when appearing before the committees.

In spite of the many many sniping charges we were able to identify the source and the charges and to fill in the story before testifying and we were correct in our assumptions in all cases with one exception. I missed it in regard to something that had happened in Texas and the committee had a smile about this but the rest of the time we hit the problem directly on the head and I think they were somewhat surprised in view of the fact that we had not seen the investigative report and didn't always know where the investigative report came from.

The leaders of the opposition to Public Housing in the House acted upon the theory that iteration and reiteration of a story made the story true in the minds of most people. So the Corporation Sub-committee replayed the material that had been leaked to the New York paper earlier by putting out their own press release. Then after a very short period of a few weeks they passed it on to Congressman John Taber who was chairman of the whole appropriation committee who played the same material in a press release put out by himself and then they passed on the material to





the Banking and Currency Committee and Congressman Jesse Wolcott and his cohorts after a short time replayed the same material in a press release.

It developed that the Corporation Sub-Committee made the investigative report available to members of the press by simply laying it out on the table and allowing them to come in and look at it and to glean from it any tidbits that they thought might be useful in their own local areas. When we realized what had happened I called Ben Jensen and reminded him of his promise to see that we got a chance to see the investigative report in case anybody saw it. He hemmed and hawed about it and I realized that he was under orders from the stronger members of the sub-committee not to allow it to happen.

Finally at a Corporation Sub-committee hearing in the middle of 1947, Congressman Ploeser and Jamie Whitten in my presence discussed with the sub-committee members the question of whether the investigative report by Robert E. Lee and his aide should be published by the committee for general distribution. Since we had never seen the report I interrupted to tell the sub-committee that we felt that since we had not had an opportunity to reply to the report it would be unfair to the agency and to the American people unless we had the opportunity to reply to such a publication.

Congressman Ploeser who had taken over the chairmanship of the subcommittee in the meantime from Congressman Jensen informed me in no uncertain terms that the subcommittee would decide what to do with the report without the need of advice from me. I granted that I knew that this would be possible and a probability but it would still be unfair to the American public and to the agency. I might add that the report as such was never published.

HP: This must have been a trying time for you.

DSM: Yes, it was.

The Corporation Sub-committee retaliated by cutting our budget for staff and administrative purposes drastically so we found it necessary to reduce staff



both in Washington and in the field. We combined the Seattle and San Francisco Regional Offices, made drastic adjustments in other field offices and in Washington and by the time this adjustment was required Raymond Foley, former Commissioner of the Federal Housing Authority, had replaced Wilson Wyatt as head of the Housing and Home Finance Agency. I presented our plans for making our adjustments in personnel and in cuts required on two or three occasions to Raymond Foley and his staff and I thought that I had his approval to go ahead with our plan. So I called a meeting of our regional people and key representatives of our Washington office to outline our plan.

On the very morning about fifteen minutes before I was expected to go into the meeting to make the announcement Frank Waters, who was then serving as the Administrative Officer for Raymond Foley and the Housing Agency, appeared on the scene and said that Ray Foley had asked him to come over and tell us that he didn't want to go ahead with any personnel changes at that time and that we should hold up action. I, of course, was baffled and incensed. I called Ray Foley on the phone and explained that we had reviewed the proposals thoroughly and I felt that I had his approval and that I could not understand the switch. I explained that it would be most embarrassing to everyone concerned including him and myself and the agency. He finally said grudgingly "Go ahead" but that we might have to take another look at it later. So we went ahead.

I am sure that Ray Foley at that stage wanted my resignation and he thought that this move might bring it. Later in the Congressional session of 1947 the Congress passed a Housing Reorganization Act which established the Housing and Home Finance Agency which included under its charter the Public Housing Administration, the Federal Housing Administration, and the Home Loan Bank Board. The passage of this legislation required the reconfirmation by the Senate of all the incumbent heads of all of these sub-agencies who were Presidential Appointees.

This meant that my name as Commissioner of the Public Housing Administration would need to be pre-



sented again to the Senate. Not long after this legislation had passed and had been signed, John Steelman who at that time was serving as President Truman's right-hand man and trouble-shooter, called me and said the President wanted me to join the White House staff as one of the anonymous Presidential assistants. He made no explanation as to why. After trying for two or three weeks to get Steelman to tell me why the proposed change of jobs I finally asked to see the President. I had no trouble getting an appointment with President Truman and when I entered his office I found him busy looking over a stack of telegrams regarding a speech which he had made a few days before relating to his argument with Senator Taft regarding the continuation of OPA.

He explained what he was doing and when I asked him how they were running he said "Mostly favorable." Then he handed me one from an undertaker somewhere in Arizona and after I read it he said "That son of a bitch wants an answer from me for advertising purposes but he ain't going to get it."

Then I told the President about my dilemma, and told him I wished to know if he was unhappy with my administration of P.H.A. He said "There isn't anyone I would rather have on the job as Commissioner of P.H.A. than yourself, but Bob Taft has told us that he will oppose your reconfirmation, and since he comes from your home state we don't think we can get the job done in view of his opposition." I thanked the President and told him that I appreciated both his confidence and his frankness. I then said that I appreciated his offer to be a member of his immediate staff as an assistant to the President but if he had no objections I would like to explore the field before making a decision. He said that would be perfectly all right with him.

I was offered two different jobs at this time. One was the job as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs which I was interested in but after exploration with people on the Hill who handled appropriations and Indian legislation, I found that the administrative budget was so tight and with very little chance of getting it changed in the Eightieth Congress,





which was anti-administration, I didn't feel that it would be possible to make the adjustments that I felt were going to be necessary to get the job done that I wanted to do. I felt that I wouldn't have the elbow room administratively to do an adequate job. So I turned it down.

The other job was that of President of the Institute of Inter-American Affairs. More about that a little later.

In the meantime I notified Ray Foley that I would be moving to the new job as of January 1 and that during the two or three weeks interim I planned to take some vacation. So I went gaily off to Florida for a rest that I felt that I very badly needed after battling over the housing program.

During the time that I was gone I designated Philip Glick, the PHA counsel, as acting Commissioner in my stead. But upon my return I found that Ray Foley had asked that I be transferred immediately, and as a consequence they had had to ask the State Department to put me on their payroll by the use of a special fund of some type until the decks could be cleared on January 1 by the resignation of the former President of the Institute.

In the meantime Ray Foley designated John Egan head of the Management Division as the Acting Commissioner. This was the second sleezy trick that Ray Foley had pulled and it wasn't very much appreciated.

The year and one half as Commissioner of the Federal Public Housing Authority was spent in large part learning what I needed to know about the program, the laws and the established policies and in fighting off the wolves in the National Real Estate Board and in the Congress who were attempting to kill the public housing program.

The biggest job otherwise had to do with the problems of management, sale and reconstruction of wartime housing which had been the major job of the agency during the war years and following. Because of the tremendous demand for veterans' housing much of the





so-called temporary housing was either used in place or moved and reconstructed for veterans' use especially in urban centers like New York and many other centers throughout the country. Pressures for the sale of semi-permanent and permanent housing were heavy and many projects were sold.

Some of it was sold and moved by the purchasers where it was possible to move it. The largest sale that we made during this period including Fairlington, a large apartment building which had been constructed in Fairfax County, Virginia, and the McLean Gardens Apartments in Washington, D.C. These two were sold as one package and I as Commissioner received the biggest check that I have ever had in my hands as a down payment on this package deal. It was in the neighborhood of four million dollars.

One of the major battles developed over the sale of housing to veterans cooperatives. Jesse Wolcott and Ben Jensen as chairman of the Banking and Currency Committee and the Corporation Sub-committee respectively, held a hearing on the policy relating to credit and then put out a press release in which they demanded that we sell for cash on the barrel head. We followed this action by addressing a carefully worded letter to the two chairmen pointing out that such a policy would mean that only the large and rich real estate operators could buy under the policy which they had laid down and which I was sure was their intent and the veterans groups generally would be unable to purchase.

Drew Pearson's office heard of the hassel. They called me to ask about our response and I told them that we had sent a letter. They asked if they might have a copy and I said of course. It was public business and I supplied a copy to them and they published the gist of our reply and it really stirred up the dogs. Veterans wrote in to Jensen and Wolcott. Jensen particularly was very upset and as a result however they did provide authority for the use of federally guaranteed loans which served the purpose which we had in mind in any case.

Ben Jensen was very angry at me, for he thought that I had initiated the action by contacting Drew



Pearson, which of course I had not done. It took years to calm him down and to get back to a reasonably friendly basis with him. This was of some importance because he was still a member of the appropriation sub-committee that handled our appropriations for Indian Affairs later.

There was very little activity in starting new public housing projects during 1946 and 1947 but additional housing units were added in some areas by the transfer of war housing to the Public Housing local agencies handling public housing.

#### A Visit From The Mayor Of Minneapolis

DSM: One visitor that I had while I was Commissioner was the Mayor of Minneapolis, Hubert H. Humphrey. He came in to get more information about public housing and housing legislation. There were two things of some importance to me that grew out of that visit. Hubert Humphrey went back to Minnesota and pushed a bill through the Minnesota legislature authorizing a public housing program for the State of Minnesota at a time when this seemed like an impossible task in view of the fact that everything seemed to be running against public housing.

The other matter of importance was that I became a great admirer of Hubert Humphrey beginning with that visit and my admiration has grown throughout the twenty years of acquaintance.



My Last Days In Housing

DSM: Had I realized what was to happen in the public housing area during the period when I was to take over the job I probably would have accepted the offer to become the last appointed Governor of Puerto Rico in spite of my antipathy to the social and protocol requirements of that office which led to my non-acceptance. The Public Housing milieu was a strange environment for a farm boy who had spent the first fifty years of his life on the farm or in agricultural work. The atmosphere in housing was almost one hundred percent urban and I am sure that many of the city reared staff and supporters never quite understood the actions of a farm reared lad.

Perhaps it was just not a matter of being farm reared. I could not accustom myself to the ease with which many of the people in the housing field were able to adjust their sights in order to meet the political needs of the moment, and also their willingness in some cases to overlook regulations and to do things which I had been brought up to avoid because it was either dishonest or it was disloyal or for some other ethical reason. Most of the people that I worked with were efficient and highly ethical. But there were people on the staff or in local housing authorities who I felt did not hold the type of ethical standards that I felt should be maintained.

When the word got around that I was leaving housing I had two jobs offered to me. One of them was the job of Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. After spending a week or two investigating the possibility of additional funds for the administrative area where I felt that I needed some elbow room, I gave that up because I didn't think we had a chance during the Eightieth Congress to secure the appropriations necessary to make the adjustments that I thought needed to be made.





## CHAPTER XII

A DECISION TO MOVE TO THE INSTITUTE OF INTER-AMERICAN  
AFFAIRS AS PRESIDENT

DSM: The other job was the Presidency of the Institute of Inter-American Affairs. John Drier, who was an old friend of mine and a former employee in the Soil Conservation Service was a member of the Department of State. He had recommended that I take on the Institute job. After being interviewed by Norman Armour and other members of the board of trustees I agreed to take on the job as of January 1, 1948.

This agency included segments of the program which was organized and supervised by Nelson Rockefeller as Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs which had had its beginnings in 1939 and was greatly expanded during World War II. After World War II it was drastically reduced again. Nelson Rockefeller had established a series of corporations chartered under Delaware laws and those that still existed after the war were brought together under the Government Corporation Act as a federal government corporation.

This corporation was named the Institute of Inter-American Affairs and there were three major divisions responsible for the supervision of projects in Latin America. The largest division or activity was the health and sanitation program, which had projects in eighteen of the twenty-two Latin American countries. There was an educational division which ranked second in number of projects. They limited their activities to vocational educational projects in twelve countries. The third division supervised the agricultural programs in four countries at the time that I took over. The program had been under study in 1945 to determine whether it should be continued. Two representatives of the State Department visited Latin America at different times to appraise the work of the Institute. Louis Halle who now lives in Switzerland and has written many articles and books and a former member of



the State Department, was one of those and Andy Corey, who is now the Ambassador to Ceylon, both made trips to Latin America, separately. They both came back most enthusiastic about the programs and their testimony before the Congressional Committees had a most important bearing on the issuance of a new charter.

In 1948 only about three and a half million dollars were appropriated for the work carried forward by the U.S. Government under the three divisions and the administrative fund was so drastically reduced that we found it necessary to eliminate the field auditors, and this led us into a battle with the General Accounting Office at a later date.

A head of the division of GAO resented the fact that as a government corporation we were not subject to the same field audit procedure by the GAO as were non-corporate agencies. So he dug up many incidents of what he claimed were improper expenditures that went all the way back to 1940. All of these alleged discrepancies happened before my time but they presented their case before the House Committee on Government Expenditures of which Porter Hardy of Virginia was chairman. This meant that we were called upon to dig back through the records to check every case presented in order to be prepared to defend the agency. This we did and after several days of hearings we came out on top. This is the first and only time that I won an argument with the General Accounting Office. However the GAO representative retaliated by charging that I was opposed to auditors and to audits because we had found it necessary to drop our field audit staff in order to maintain adequate finance staff.

The Institute projects were carried on in cooperation with the various Latin American governments by means of a unique device called a "Servicio." A "Servicio" was established as a separate entity of the Latin American governments and was usually headed by the Institute Party Chief but jointly financed, and the joint contributions constituted a "Servicio" fund which served to provide finances for personnel, and for other costs such as materials and local labor. The field party members were hired and financed by the Institute.



This constituted a very happy working arrangement in most countries and the "Servicio" carried on even after changes in regimes in all cases with one exception. The "Servicio" provided stability and avoided political manipulation to a large extent and we were also assured that the funds were being properly looked after which was not always true in the Latin American governments.

The one project which was dropped during my regime was in Guatemala where the Communists were moving in and wanted full control of all the educational activities. The pressure became so heavy that the educational program was dropped during that period. The expenditures of the various "Servicio" programs were at least three times as much as we contributed from the Institute budget because appropriations were made by the local government to these various projects which were generally quite popular.

#### A Try For A New Charter

DSM: Before approaching Congress for a bill for a new charter it was necessary first of all to get the support of our board of directors, all of whom were key members of the State Department staff; the Secretary of State; and then the Bureau of the Budget.

I had decided in the meantime that we should start at least a year ahead of time in order to be sure to have the charter extended which was to run only until 1950. Norman Armour was Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs and the Chairman for the Institute Board of Trustees at the time of my arrival on the scene but unfortunately he had retired soon after, and Paul C. Daniels, an old State Department hand, was made Acting Assistant Secretary and he unfortunately like several of the old time foreign service officers were opposed to the work of the Institute. They felt that it simply messed up



their so-called diplomatic functions. As a result of this change my proposal for a new charter was held up for many weeks because the Acting Assistant Secretary and Chairman of the Board did not approve.

I finally asked for a meeting with the Acting Secretary of State at a time when Secretary George Marshall was away. Robert A. Lovett was Acting Secretary. I presented my case to him in quick summary in about ten minutes and he approved our approach so we were on our way again. We had no trouble in getting the approval from the Bureau of the Budget.

The next problem was to get the right sponsorship in the Congress. Congressman John Key from West Virginia was chairman of the House committee on foreign affairs and at the time was ill and in the hospital. When I went to see the Acting Chairman, James P. Richards of South Carolina, he told me that he was favorable but he felt that he should clear with Representative Key before acting. This he did and in our next meeting he was so friendly that he said that he would name a sub-committee to hold hearings and asked who I would like as chairman of the sub-committee. I immediately told him that Mike Mansfield of Montana would be my choice. He then told me who he would appoint as the other members of the sub-committee and he particularly advised me to see Robert B. Chiperfield of Illinois who was the ranking Republican on the committee and also on the sub-committee. I visited Representative Chiperfield and found that he favored action in the Latin American countries but was opposed to foreign aid in other parts of the world. The result was that we had a very friendly sub-committee and our bill went to the House and was passed in good time.

I found that our "friendly enemy" in the General Accounting Office had not given up however because he had convinced Mike Mansfield and Porter Hardy that we should have some field auditors. So before the bill went before the full committee and to the House I agreed to hire at least three auditors if the bill was passed. This is the kind of compromise you sometimes have to make under pressures of this type.





Senator Tom Connelly of Texas who was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senator Arthur Vandenburg was the ranking Republican member. We were asked to make some compromises upon the suggestions of Senator Vandenburg. I felt strongly that we should stand by our bill but the State Department counsel took it upon himself to agree with the change from the ten years to five as to the length of the charter and also to a limitation on funds which was somewhat lower than I had hoped for.

#### Another Offer To Head The Bureau Of Indian Affairs

DSM: The bill was finally passed in good order but not before President Truman called me at home after his reelection in 1948 and asked me to take over the job as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This was the second time I had been asked to take this job. I told the President that we had some problems that needed my attention and he said to make a date with Matt Connelly, his appointments officer, and come in to see him. So I called Matt and the appointment was set up.

During our visit I told the President that we had just gotten under way with what I felt was an important proposed piece of legislation to extend the charter of the Institute and I felt that I should see it through to final passage for I was fearful that anyone new would have problems unless he could have several months to prepare himself as I had had. The President said "Well, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has gone along for quite some time without any Commissioner and maybe two or three months more would not make too much difference."



### A Successful Appeal For More Funds

DSM: I then took the bull by the horns and said "Mr. President, I have another problem." He said "What's that." I replied "We are asking for an increase in funds for the next fiscal year for the Institute and I was fearful that we might not get it and it was badly needed." He pulled a pad over to him and he then said "How much do you need?" I said "Five million dollars," which was about one and one half million dollars more than the budget at that time. It was the only time in my lengthy career in government that I ever had the chance to appeal to a President for funds. We got our funds approved by the Bureau of the Budget.

Some months later a friend, Mel Spector, told me that he had been seated next to Fred Lawton, Director of the Bureau of the Budget, at an administrative organization meeting. After a time he asked Fred Lawton if he knew Dillon Myer and Lawton began to laugh and said "Yes, I know Dillon Myer. I have a funny story to tell you." He then told Mel that when he was Director of the Bureau of the Budget he had taken the proposed annual budget over to President Truman for his review and approval and in the midst of their discussion the President said "By the way I want you to give Dillon Myer what he requesting - Five million dollars." I then said "Why Mr. President?", and President Truman said "I have a shitty ass job that I want him to do." He of course was referring to the Bureau of Indian Affairs job.

I have always considered that my major contribution to the Institute of Inter-American Affairs was securing the passage of the bill that extended to charter to 1955, and the increased budget which the President helped with. As a matter of fact if he had not said to give it to us we probably would not have had it.

The Institute was rather a quiet spot after WRA and Public Housing Administration because there was very little Congressional interest except by the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Foreign Relations.



There were few if any Congressmen who had constituents in Latin America. Consequently the calls from Congressmen and Senators were few and far between but it was an interesting and worthwhile job. I visited a number of Latin American countries during two major field trips. We had a good staff in Washington and good field staff members for the most part and much good work was accomplished.

I think that I should mention that I got in touch with Nelson Rockefeller to tell him about out legislation for a new charter and asked his aid especially with Senator Vandenberg and the Republican members of the Senate. He was delighted that the program was going forward and he cheerfully agreed to contact the key people in the Senate.

I think that I should mention also that during the time that we were at the Institute Philip Glick, my solicitor, my secretary and I took a course in Spanish at the Foreign Service Institute over a period of a year's time. We met three times a week. We never became very proficient in the Spanish language but we did get so that we could read the Spanish newspapers.

#### A Middle East Interlude

DSM: During my last year in the Institute during the summer of 1949 Roswell Barnes of the Federal Council of Churches called me from New York and said that he had talked to Clarence Pickett who was then Executive Director of the Friends Service Committee and that they had agreed that I should be recommended for the Directorship of the Arab Refugee Program in the Middle East. A little later Clarence Pickett urged me to consider it also. Soon after that they must have sold George McGee on the idea. George, at that time, was Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle Eastern Affairs because he began a campaign to get me to agree to take the job. George McGee was one of the board of trustees for the Institute of Inter-American Affairs





so I saw him regularly and he pressed me several times about the job. He even sent Paul Porter over to see me to try to talk me into the job. Paul was a long time friend going back to the early days of my Washington tour in the Department of Agriculture. Paul had been in Geneva for several weeks in an attempt to mediate between the Arabs and the Jews following the battles of 1948.

Along about August of 1949 it was announced that a United Nations mission was to go to the Middle East to make a study of the refugee and related problems. The mission head who had been selected to go to the Middle East was Gordon Clapp of the T.V.A. and this was to be a two months study of the Arab and the Jewish situation and what might be done about it. I learned about this and when I was pressed again by George McGee to take over the Directorship of the Arab Refugee program I said to him "Why don't you attach me to the mission for the next two months to give me a chance to study the refugee problem and if after a look see as a member of the mission I then feel that something constructive can be done about it I will be interested in taking on the job." George McGee agreed and I also asked that Rex Lee was assigned to work with me. After a conference with Andrew Cordier, Deputy to the United Nations Director, I was assigned and sworn in.

Up until early September I had never met Gordon Clapp. He and most of the mission members who were assigned reported directly to Beirut while Mrs. Myer, Rex Lee and I went to Beirut by way of Geneva, Switzerland for three and a half days in order to be briefed by the refugee director's office which maintained headquarters in Geneva at that time. Ambassador Griffith was serving in a dual capacity. He was Ambassador to Egypt and Arab Refugee Director.

After Geneva we went to Beirut by United Nations plane and upon arrival I was full of questions and ideas about what was to be done. I went in for a chat with Gordon Clapp, and I received one of the neatest brushoffs that I have ever received in my life. He quite obviously did not want any suggestions and he practically told me in a very tactful and firm manner that everything was under control and that I need not



worry about it. He didn't say it in those words but that was the feeling that I got.

The heads of the mission represented four countries. Gordon Clapp of course represented the U.S.A. as chairman, Great Britain, France, and Turkey were also represented, and these were the people who were presumably overseeing the job. Since my services were apparently not needed or generally accepted, Rex Lee and the crew who was assigned to us went on a number of field trips to visit refugee centers in Trans-Jordan and such places as Jericho, the ruins across from the hotel in Aman, the old Roman ruins which was full of people and other points throughout the Jordanian area.

Molly Flynn, Nora Powell, both good folks were assigned to me. Nora was a statistician and was very helpful on statistics. Herbert Kounde from U.S.A. was also assigned along with a Britisher whose name doesn't come back to me at the moment. During the various trips we covered most of western Syria from Aleppo to the Trans-Jordan line. Also Nablus in Palistine and the Arab portion of Jerusalem. We covered Israel from the Lebanon boundary to the Negev including the Dead Sea area. We visited Acre, Nazareth, Galilee, Tel Aviv, Joffa, and the Jewish portion of Jerusalem. We also visited the Gaza strip which was in Egyptian hands and which had more than seventy thousand refugees in this small strip of about twenty-five miles long and only about five miles wide. Those people were packed in there on top of the residents who were already there making up a total around one hundred thousand people in this little spot.

We went on to Cairo for a couple of days trip to take care of some business with some of the agencies who had headquarters there. We also covered Lebanon from Tripoli to the Israel border as well as the territory between Beirut and Damascus, Syria. We visited many refugee camps as well as areas left behind by the refugees.

We prepared carefully documented reports on the visits and made checks and samplings of the size of the refugee population in the various areas and



finally worked out a figure to our satisfaction as to the number of refugees; which incidentally did not agree with the British representative who insisted that many of these people who were in camps now had gathered in after they had evacuated Israel. Perhaps a few had but not many. After the most extensive field work done by any of the mission staff we were completely ignored when it came to preparing the final report.

We were on a field trip during the time that the report was prepared and did not know that it was to be prepared at that time. When we got back I found that the report had been completed and typed. We got back on late Saturday and on Sunday morning I went to the office and went to Gordon Clapp's secretary and insisted on seeing a copy. She quite obviously had been told not to give me a copy but I got one just the same. I had to pour the pressure on pretty hard.

I read the report and disagreed with it in many aspects. I made my comments, sent them forward to Gordon Clapp and he sent them back with notations on the side in response to my comments which he didn't want in his files. I took them back to his secretary and said "I think you will want to file this. This is my comments on the final report." I don't think it was ever filed but nevertheless I had the satisfaction of taking it back. I had turned the report over to Rex Lee to read, as soon as I had read it, and he wasn't half way through when Clapp's good man Friday who he brought with him from T.V.A. came in and gathered it up and wouldn't let him finish it. So what I did was to prepare a minority report which was not distributed generally but I did prepare a report for Andy Cordier who was the Deputy Director of the United Nations whom I had talked with before I came over, for Clarence Pickett who was largely responsible for my being over there and for George McGee of the State Department who had recommended that I be taken along. These were the only copies that I distributed to anybody.

When we finished our work Mrs. Myer, Rex Lee and I took the plane from Damascus back to Brussels





where we spent a day and then Mrs. Myer and I spent two weeks in Paris with a three day interim visit in London where we went with the Ambassador's plane. At that time Averill Harriman was in charge of the Mutual Security program.

While I was in Paris Andy Cordier from the United Nations called me by phone and asked me if I could come on back to New York sooner than I had planned for the reason that Mr. Clapp and other key people were not planning to be in New York at a time when the General Assembly was to meet and he was anxious that they have somebody there at the time that the report was presented to discuss it and to answer questions. I told Andy Cordier that I didn't believe that he would want me to come back and he said "Why not?" I said "Well, I had no part in writing this report. I do not agree with much of the report. I would not be able to cover up my feelings about it if I came back to meet with the General Assembly; and as a matter of fact I have written a minority report which is for your hands and for the hands of George McGee and Clarence Pickett only, which will give you some idea as to what my feelings are about the situation."

He listened and asked a few questions and finally heaved a sigh of relief or disgust, I have never been quite sure which, and said he agreed that I should not come back. So I didn't come back to report to the United Nations.

This was one of the worst fiascos that I think I have ever been involved in. I felt sure by the time we left there that for some reason or other Gordon Clapp had agreed to write the program pretty much as the British representative dictated and I wasn't absolutely certain but several years later when Arthur Gardner who had been McGee's assistant was in Viet Nam working with Leland Barrows, the subject came up and he admitted to Leland Barrows that the whole pattern was agreed to before they ever started work and this was in line with what I was pretty sure had happened but this was confirmation.

On my way back to Washington I stopped in New York. Ambassador Griffith who had been in Egypt, as





I have already indicated, who was planning to go on to Argentina as Ambassador at that time, came out to the airport to spend some time with me to try to convince me further that I should take the job as Refugee Director because he was trying to find a replacement. I had found things in such a shape that I didn't feel that there was a chance to do a job so when I returned to Washington I told George McGee that I didn't believe that I was interested in taking the job. So I went to work again at the Institute in early December of 1949 and continued there until May 8, 1950 when I finally accepted the bid from Oscar Chapman, who had become Secretary of the Interior while I was abroad in 1949 and who was determined that I become Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.





Dillon S. Myer, Commissioner of the Federal Public Housing Authority. 1947.



Chief of a Chippewa Indian Group in Wisconsin initiating Dillon Myer, Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as a member of the tribe. The feather head-dress was symbol of the occasion. 1952.



Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman with Staff members from the Department and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in consultation with Indians representing twelve different tribal groups. Commissioner Dillon S. Myer standing in back row to Secretary Chapman's left. 1952. Seated left to right: Albert Yava- Hopi, Thomas Segundo- Papago, Maxwell Yazzie- Navajo, George Adams- Skokomish, Charles Reeves- Blackfeet, Secretary Chapman, Floyd Maytubby- Chickasaw, Frank George- Colville, Henry Vicente- Jicarilla-Apache, Norton Edwards, Office of the Secretary. Standing left to right: Warren Spaulding- BIA, Ervin Utz-BIA, Asst. Sec. McKinney, Asst. Sec. Wolfsohn, Peter Grant- Blackfeet, Ed Wilson- Chippewa, Indian Commissioner Myer, Jasper Long- Crow, Alfred Chalepah- Kiowa-Apache, Richard La Roche- Lower Brule Sioux.



## CHAPTER XIII

ANOTHER MOVE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AS  
COMMISSIONER OF THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

DSM: I was surprised at the offer of the job as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the spring of 1950 even from Oscar Chapman who was such a good backer and a good friend, because John Nichols of New Mexico had been appointed Commissioner less than two years before. I didn't think that they would make a change because of his having come from New Mexico. I had assumed that he had been recommended by Senator Clinton Anderson, a very important member of the Senate Interior Committee. I found that he had evidently agreed to it because as soon as my name was announced Clint called me up and I went up and talked with him and he told me things that he thought that I ought to know about what the bureau staff did to John Nichols and not to let them do it to me. But in any case before accepting the job I posed a series of questions and requests to Secretary Chapman and he gave satisfactory answers to most of them.

One of them was a request that I report directly to him as the Secretary rather than through an Assistant Secretary. Bill Warne was the Assistant Secretary at the time and I am sure that he never told Bill that this was what was happening but as long as Bill was Assistant Secretary I did report to Oscar Chapman and Bill would call me up occasionally and make suggestions and I would listen very tactfully and very carefully and thank him very much.

In any case along about two or three months after I became Commissioner he appointed Dale Doty, who long had been one of his assistants, as Assistant Secretary and I did report through him most of the time, although I always had access to the Secretary whenever I felt that I needed it or whenever I had an argument with the Assistant Secretary.





Probably the most important agreement that was made at the time I was asked to take over the job was that Rex Lee who was then Assistant Director of the division of Territories Islands and Possessions was to become Associate Commissioner of Indian Affairs. He moved over the day that I reported for the job.

William Zimmerman had been Assistant Commissioner throughout many many years and had been acting Commissioner frequently during that time because the Commissioner during the 1940's was ill with tuberculosis much of the time. Bill Zimmerman was moved over to Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Land Management and Rex Lee took over the spot as my key assistant.

In addition to Rex Lee, Erwin Utz who had worked with me throughout many years in different jobs, became Assistant Commissioner in charge of lands and resources and John Province from my W.R.A. staff was already Assistant Commissioner in charge of the area which involved health, education and the social services.

It was necessary that my name be presented to the Senate for confirmation, which had been required throughout the years because the job of Commissioner of Indian Affairs was one of only two bureau chief jobs in the government that was still a Presidential appointive job. That and the Chief of the Forest Service were the only two. Usually bureau chiefs are appointed by a particular Secretary in charge of the department but that was not true of Indian Affairs.

Rex Lee, who had been very close to the Congressional committees during the four years or so when he was in the division of Territory and Insular Affairs, sensed that there might be some real opposition to my appointment so he went up to see Senator Butler on the morning after it was announced.

Senator Butler was from Nebraska and was the ranking minority member on the Interior Committee. Rex was well acquainted with the secretary in the front office, and when he walked in and asked if the



Senator was available she nodded her head toward the Senator's inner office and said "Indians". Rex stuck around until he got into the Senator's office and he found that the Senator had his desk piled full of documents from the Dies Committee and from all the committees that had ever had me on the pan throughout the years and was trying to find something that was derogatory because Fulton Lewis Jr., a muck-raking radio commentator, had called him and asked him to dig up some information which he could use in opposition to my appointment on that evening's broadcast. So Senator Butler was working on this task.

He said "I hear that this man Myer is a Communist", and Rex said "Well, Senator I am afraid you are mistaken. He is just a farm boy like you and me." He said "Farm boy?" Rex said "Yes, he grew up on a farm in Ohio and he is no more Communist than either you or I or anyone else who has grown up under such circumstances." So they chatted awhile and he sent the files back and decided that he was not going to be quoted.

However Fulton Lewis Jr. did find somebody that he could quote because Ben Jensen in the House, who was from Iowa and who had been very mad at me during the housing period because he thought I had leaked some material to Drew Pearson and never had gotten over it, was perfectly willing to allow his name to be used. So on Fulton Lewis Jr.'s broadcast that night he took out after me and among other things he said and I quote "This man Myer has been in Government a long long time and he has had job after job after job and everytime he fails in one the President finds another one for him."

In spite of Fulton Lewis Jr. and his broadcast and certain other opposition that flared up the Interior Committee endorsed my appointment and recommended me unanimously for the job and I was approved by the Senate. There were a few old timers from among the Indian politicians who were there to make a speech including Bob Yellowtail who had at one time been Indian agent for his tribe the Crows. Bob was still bitter because he had gotten fired back in the days when he didn't think he should have been so he was



out to attack anybody. This didn't have much effect because the committee knew him quite well.

I reported for duty on May 8, 1950. I had no more than seated myself in the Commissioner's chair than I had a clipping from the New York Times laid on my desk. It was a letter which John Collier, former Commissioner for many years, had written to the New York Times telling them about this man Myer and what a terrible guy he was and explained in some detail just what Myer was going to do about the Indians.

John Collier had gotten very upset at me back in the days of WRA because the Poston Relocation Center which was on the Colorado Indian Reservation was operated for awhile by the Bureau of Indian Affairs under a contract which was arranged before I became Director of WRA. In the fall of 1942 in less than six months after I took over the job, I visited Poston and made a speech in which I made it clear that our major policy was going to be to help people relocate into the rest of the United States rather than to continue to live in the Poston center. It was only after I made this speech that I learned that John Collier had been there just two or three weeks before and had painted pretty pictures about how they would probably be there for forty years or more and they would develop land and they would be able to have a fine brand new community, etc., etc. This, of course, was entirely opposite from what John had said and he never quite forgave me, and I might say his blast at the beginning of my regime was not his last attack because he kept it up throughout my nearly three years of tenure and if he wasn't able to do it directly he did it through a stooge or two who was in the Department of Interior and who tried to bring pressure to bear on the Secretary not to approve some of the things that I tried to do.

Joel Wolfson was our worst problem in that respect. He had been in Interior for a long time and had worked closely with Collier previously. Joel was always very affable when I saw him, but I was sure he was cutting my throat regularly.





Resistance To Change In An Old Government Bureau

DSM:       The Bureau of Indian Affairs had been reorganized about two years before I became Commissioner. Area offices were established throughout the western part of the United States and presumably most of the line administrative activities were to be delegated to the area director and his staff. This meant an important change to the Washington staff who had been carrying out the line operations throughout the years with the agents in the various reservations as the people who put them into effect. The Washington staff now became staff officers rather than line officers and some of them didn't care much for the switch. Old habits are hard to break and many authorities which were supposed to be delegated to the field were still retained by the Washington staff heads. So we proceeded very soon after I arrived on the scene to start work on a new manual.

      We brought over Ted Taylor from the Territories and Island Possessions to handle our processing of administrative procedures and during the first few months we were involved in preparing a thorough-going manual which delegated the proper line jobs to the field and outlined the jobs and the responsibilities of the staff officers in Washington.

      The installation of the revised procedures, as might be expected, brought about some repercussions; one of which was the resignation of Willard Beatty who for years had been head of the educational division of the bureau and who had run that division with no questions asked. Willard came to see me after we proposed to put the change into effect and said that he didn't want to operate as a staff man. He wanted to operate the schools as he had been doing. I said that I was awfully sorry but I thought the plans had been laid some time before and I thought it was time to put them into effect. Well the upshot was that he resigned and went to UNESCO. Some of the other folks didn't like it much better than Willard did but there were no further resignations.





I found that there were certain other problems which were hard to overcome. One of them was that some of our division chiefs had been there through a number of changes in Commissioners and they had been in the habit of trying to figure out what the Commissioner wanted and tried to provide him with the answers that he wanted. I never did like Yes men. I didn't want them to guess what I wanted done. Our worst case of this kind was the chief of the Land Management Division and throughout the nearly three years that I was Commissioner I tried my best to break him of the habit but the disease was so firmly set that I never did change him. I had to listen and decide that he was telling me in most cases just what he thought that I should know but rather what he thought I wanted to hear.

### The Program

DSM: The Bureau of Indian Affairs throughout the years had carried out services to the Indians which had been expanded many times. Some of the early treaties had provided for fairly simple services to be provided at the reservation level: services such as providing a blacksmith, a doctor, and maybe a schoolteacher or two, and services of this type. In some cases they even had agreed to provide so many yards of calico each year.

One group in New York state who were no longer in a federal reservation had a treaty which provided that they should get a certain number of yards of calico each year under the treaty and in spite of the fact that their population had increased and that each one would only get a quarter of a yard of calico apiece they insisted upon having the calico doled out each year to each member of the tribe! I presume this was important to them as a indication that the treaty was still in effect and that any other phase of the treaty should not be abandoned. So they weren't willing to



abandon even this one. There were many other items that were holdovers, I am sure, from the early days and from early treaties.

For the Navajo reservation, for example, there was a provision at the time that they came back from Texas where they had been placed during the Civil War that they would have one schoolteacher for each thirty-five pupils and the schools would be provided for all of the Navajo youngsters. There were about eight thousand of them at that time. The Government attempted time and time again throughout the years to fulfill this agreement but it was not accomplished until after World War II. I will comment on this a little more later but there were things of various types that the Government had promised that they weren't able to carry out, in some cases because of lack of cooperation on the part of the Indians themselves.

There were certain functions which had grown up throughout the years either by law or by tradition. They may be summarized as follows -- there were about fifteen of them.

Education was a very important one as far as the Federal Government was concerned and as far as many Indians were concerned and up until a few years before the educational work had been carried largely by Indian schools, many of them boarding schools.

The health program which had been expanded throughout the years was another of the very important functions.

Welfare, which meant providing for people who did not have enough food or weren't able to take care of themselves was another function which was handled directly by the Federal Government.

Agriculture Extension Service was established in the 1920's or the early 1930's.

Shortly before I became Commissioner a relocation and placement program had been started in connection with the Navajos who were interested in going to boarding schools outside the reservation and in



receiving placement in jobs but very little work was being done of this type except in Los Angeles. We expanded this function greatly during our regime. We provided a training program and a relocation placement program and we established offices in a number of places in the United States including Denver, Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, and other major areas where the opportunities for employment were good.

HP: Do you know whether they still exist?

DSM: Oh yes. They not only still exist but they finally adopted a program which we had recommended before I left the Bureau of providing vocational training for up to two years for Indians who wanted to take vocational training as a basis for relocation. We stunned the sub-committee on one of our trips to the Hill with an appropriation bill in which we asked for eight million dollars for this type of work. We didn't get it at that particular time but about two years later they did get it, and this work has been carried forward. Many young Indians have received the kind of training that they wanted to take and were able to locate themselves in jobs off the reservation.

Law and Order was another function that was carried out by the Federal Government and this of course was important in many areas because there was no local government in many of the areas where reservations were located.

Roads in the reservations were the responsibility of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, especially in those areas where there was no established local government.

Credit, which had been provided many years before as a basis for helping Indians get under way in ranching or farming in particular.

Supervision of trust lands, both tribal and individual lands, was the responsibility of the agency.

Handling individual Indian moneys who still required trustees to look after their affairs.





Division of Soil and Moisture Conservation had been established back in the late 1930's when it was transferred from the Soil Conservation Service.

Forest and Range Management was an important part of the work of the resources division.

Irrigation program, utilization of utilities including communications and power and the supervision and development of tribal enterprises such as saw mills and other types of enterprises that were important to encourage the development of the resources of the agencies.

The problems of handling forestry for example in view of the responsibilities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for their trusteeship was an entirely different problem than handling forestry in the Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture. As a matter of fact one of the agencies that made a study of the Bureau raised the question why forestry and range work could not be transferred to the Forest Service. At that time I happened to know the Forester very well who was in charge of the work in Agriculture and I talked to him about it and he said "Oh, Dillon, we don't want it. It is entirely out of our line. This isn't the type of thing that we do or that we know anything about because it had to do with dealing with the tribes, dealing with individuals, and so on, instead of looking after Federal lands as we do in the Forest Service." There were certain other things that could be handled by local and state governments and even by certain other Federal government agencies which will develop as we proceed.

As noted, the Bureau was responsible for most of the services provided in almost any city or community plus some that were unique because of the trust responsibility. Much progress had been made in contracting with local school districts following the passage of the Johnson-O'Malley act in the 1930's which provided authority to contract for services with local and state government agencies.



### Schooling For Indians

DSM: There were areas however, large ones as a matter of fact, where there were no local school facilities or local governments to deal with. For example, the Navajo reservation which is about the size of the state of West Virginia, had no local government within the reservation area so all of the services including schools had to be provided by the Federal Government because there was nobody to contract with. I'll point out a little later that we did arrange to have many of these youngsters go to school in other areas in order to get them out of the reservation complex and milieu. But this was an entirely different thing than contracting with local governments.

We proceeded throughout my nearly three years as Commissioner to get as many of the public schools which had not already taken over to take over the educational function of the Bureau. Most of this had already been done where it was feasible up to this time. It was a good thing and one of the best integrative processes that we could work out.

Some of the older boarding schools which had been utilized throughout the years particularly in Oklahoma, California and certain other areas were available for use since we had already contracted for school services with local governments in those areas. So as a result of having these available we did arrange to have Navajo youngsters and the Papagos in southern Arizona sent to California, to Oklahoma and other places to boarding schools where they could be provided with services without providing new boarding school buildings and at the same time get them into areas where they had some contact with the outside public.

This provided also an opportunity particularly for the older youngsters of high school age, many of whom had never been to school, to get intensive training for five or six years and then to be provided with opportunities for employment in the areas where they had gone to school. This was one of the



first types of relocation that was initiated. During my regime they completed the rehabilitation of an army installation in Utah where about five hundred Navajo youngsters were provided for. This school was planned particularly for youngsters between twelve and eighteen who had not had schooling and where they could have intensive courses in English, and basic elementary training plus some vocational training and could be established then in jobs if they were interested in so doing in that or other areas by the time they had finished school.

HP: What kinds of jobs?

DSM: Many kinds of vocational types of training jobs were provided. Use of machines of various types, I can't recall at the moment just what types of training we did provide.

HP: Was it for girls also?

DSM: Yes, they had some girls. More boys than girls but they had some girls.

While we are on the Navajo and while we are talking about education I think I should go a little further in my discussion about the problem that we had there. The Navajos after they came back to the reservation in northern Arizona, New Mexico and Utah became sheep herders and as a consequence many of them were nomads. In other words they moved with their flocks depending upon the season into the mountain country and into other areas, and as a consequence they weren't always available at any one place for school. Furthermore most of the older Navajos didn't want their youngsters to go to school because they didn't want them to stray away from the particular culture and the family controls. So the government was unable even though they tried very hard throughout the years following the Civil War to carry out their responsibilities which they had agreed to under the treaty to set up schools with one teacher for each thirty-five youngsters or less because the youngsters didn't go to school. This pattern was not broken until after World War II.



During World War II many of the Navajo boys were inducted into the service and rendered good service, in fact a unique service because of their ability to speak Navajo and nobody else in the world could. They were able to serve in intelligence units and to communicate among themselves across the lines and to confound the enemy and provide information for their own units. A great many of them that did go into the Army received the kind of training that the Army gave including courses in the English language, learning to read and write and many other things which they hadn't learned up to that time. When these boys came back to the reservation after the war they began to put the pressure on to have schools established and for people to go to school.

So by the time I became Commissioner in early 1950 the most important political campaign issue on the part of tribal council members and people who were running for tribal council was to back the idea of providing schools for every Navajo youngster.

This grew out of the fact that these young lads had come back after seeing some of the rest of the world and had recognized what their problems were. So the pressure was on. It was impossible over the short period of four or five years to provide enough schools and enough teachers to fill in the gaps that had been missing because of the fact that people wouldn't go to school earlier. It was only with the help of the boarding schools outside, plus building new schools which took time that we could fulfill this desire which had finally developed on the part of the Navajos for education for their children. At that time about eighty percent of the Navajos population could not speak English so the first job of the schools for the first year or two was to teach the youngsters English so that they could proceed to teach other things which they only knew how to teach in English because the teachers unfortunately didn't know the Navajo language.

It was during this period when I was Commissioner that I suggested the idea of developing some trailer schools for youngsters who were following their herds with their families as a way of providing an opport-





unity for them to learn the English language and to learn the other things that they needed to learn in elementary school. This was not adopted during my time because I wasn't able to get it across fast enough but it was adopted in the regime which followed and I was very happy to see it adopted because if you were going to reach all of the Navajo youngsters you had to provide facilities where they were. You couldn't remove them entirely from their jobs as shepherds so you had to move in where they were. Trailers were used to some extent.

Finally I think along about four or five years after I left the job as Commissioner they caught up with the backlog and were able to provide schools for every Navajo youngster who wanted to go to school or whose parents would allow him to go to school. This was highly important because it is very difficult to help to decrease a much over-populated area through placement and relocation unless the people could speak the language of the country, handle simple figures, and had some kind of ability in the way of skills such as carpentry, or other similar training which could be useful in relocation. I mentioned, that when the Navajos came back from Texas following the Civil War there were only eight thousand people. At the time I was Commissioner there were about eighty thousand Navajos and they were still increasing.

The Navajo reservation was not the only one that required that all the services be Federal services because of lack of local government. I have mentioned Papago, and the Oglala Sioux in South Dakota is another area where there was no local government. There were not even any counties organized, at least up until very recent years and they were not yet organized when I was Commissioner in the area where the large Oglala Sioux reservation was in South Dakota, so that provision did have to be made either in the way of local one or two room schools or boarding schools which were much more common for these areas.



## Health And Sanitation

DSM: Health and sanitation problems were very real problems. The problem of maintaining sixty hospitals which were under the auspices of the Bureau and of providing a reasonable approach to training in sanitary and related measures was very real. The problem of recruitment of doctors and nurses for out-of-the-way places in reservations areas was most difficult. Fortunately we did have some help from the Public Health Service but even they were not in a position to assign people who were needed someplace else so we very often got people who weren't too well adapted to reservation life.

In spite of that we were doing a pretty fair job particularly in the hospitals which were developed throughout the years, some of them large and some of them small. They had a large reservation hospital in the Navajo country because they had a very large population, but even there under the Johnson-O'Malley Act the Bureau had been able to contract with local hospitals in some areas and we continued to push for that kind of a program throughout the years when I was Commissioner. A big hospital was constructed down in the Albuquerque area to help provide services for the Pueblo people. This was constructed partly out of Bureau of Indian Affairs funds, partly out of local funds and some out of the Federal funds that were provided for hospitals generally under the bill which authorized contributions for hospital construction and this was one of the largest of its type.

The big problem other than hospitals had to do with sanitation which was very often a missing item. Indians like many poor and indigent people lived under crowded circumstances. The Navajos lived in hogans. Other tribes lived in small houses, and the Apaches still lived in skin type tepees, up in the northern Apache country. As a consequence tuberculosis was a very difficult disease to control, with lack of sanitation, crowding and inability to segregate people who had become infected. This was also true of many other types of diseases.



Hospitals could be used for people who had become quite ill but the matter of providing sanitary measures by moving people into hospitals was something else again. I talked to the doctor in charge, who had been assigned by the Public Health Service, about this and he said "There ought to be the kind of sanitary training, inspection and supervision that exists in other local governments, but there are no funds for it." I said "Well, if I can get the funds do you think you can do the job?" I got the funds and I got more money than he could spend because he couldn't find the people to do the job. It was ironic that when I managed to do what he had been pressuring me to do, and which I was delighted to do, when I got him a couple of hundred thousand dollars he couldn't use all of it because he couldn't find enough people to move into areas of this type to help get the job done.

This was one of the important problems and one of the things that we were nearly always able to get additional money for if we needed it. But it wasn't just a matter of getting additional money. It was a matter of getting additional personnel of the proper type that was important. I might as well add here that before leaving the job as Commissioner I made the recommendation that the health and sanitation services be transferred to the Public Health Service. I was somewhat reluctant to do this because of certain problems that I thought would be involved but I did it, and shortly after I left the service it was transferred. Since then the health and sanitation service has been greatly expanded.

Public Health Service has taken the job very seriously in fact maybe they are overdoing it a bit nowadays but nevertheless who am I to criticize when it was so badly undermanned back in the early days.





## Welfare

DSM: The welfare program was also a very real problem because lack of employment opportunities in many of the reservation areas was one of the very difficult problems. Excepting for about twenty or twenty-five reservations throughout the United States the Indians who were put into reservations were pushed off into some of the worst scab land and bad lands and some of the poorest agriculture lands that you could find any place in the country.

As a consequence of that plus the fact that they weren't farmers in the first place there was a real problem of finding employment in a rural community where there was no industry to amount to any thing near by so about the only employment that could be found was transitory work such as harvesting of sugar beets, and other crops during the harvest season. As a consequence many of these people worked for three or four or five months, lived on the money that they earned in doing this kind of migrant work during the crop season until it was used up and then they went on welfare until the time came again to earn some more money as migrants.

We estimated for example in one of the North Dakota reservations there weren't opportunities for employment for more than about two or three percent of the people on the reservation as far as full time employment was concerned. This is one of the reasons, by the way, that I felt very strongly about the need for training, relocation and placement in jobs outside of the reservations. So welfare was an important item and it had to be handled in such a way if possible to avoid making full time wards out of the people.

I remember telling one of my old bosses at the University of Kentucky while I was Commissioner about this particular problem. He said "In other words what you have is a lot of very much enlarged poor houses." I said "That is just about right. They are similar to the old time poor houses as far as many people are concerned."



Much progress was made in transferring the job of agriculture extension work to the state extension services during the time that I was on the job. Both Rex Lee my associate and I had been extension agents at one time and we knew something about this particular approach and we felt very deeply that it ought to be handled in the normal manner. We were able in areas where the extension service functioned with other local and county governments to get them to take over the Bureau of Indian Affairs work under contract from us and the Indians became part of the program such as Four H Club work and other things that the extension service was generally responsible for.

### Roads

DSM: Roads in the reservation was another part of the responsibility of the Bureau. We did our best in areas where there were local governments and where it was possible to do so, to work out an agreement to bring the roads up to the standard that the local governments required. Then we were able to turn them over to them for maintenance. We did much of this in California, Montana and a number of other places where this was feasible.

It was not feasible in the Navajo and many of the other large reservations where there was no local government to take over.

### Relocation Problems

DSM: It is important that I comment further on the problems of relocation and placement outside the re-



servation. Because populations have increased drastically throughout the years on the reservations, most of the reservations were over-populated by the time I came on the job. I have already mentioned the Navajo but it was also true of many others and especially in areas where there was no local industry close by where people could work. So in establishing our area and district offices to assist people in relocating we provided a number of services.

First it was necessary to provide funds for travel to where they were being relocated and funds for them to live on during the first month or six weeks after they arrived until they began to get pay checks. Our relocation officers made contact with the social agencies, welfare agencies and others, to be sure that they understood the particular problems these relocatees faced. It was necessary that they work with personnel officers in industrial plants and others to get them to understand the problem.

Without extra help we anticipated that most of these young people -- and they were mostly young people who were willing to relocate -- would go back to their home communities or to the reservations very quickly. We knew they would be lonesome, it would be the first time away from the area, they had no associates or friends, so the tendency to go out on a binge was very great.

I was gratified over the fact that our Chicago office in working with one of the industrial plants there had found that certain young chaps after three or four weeks did go out on a binge and wouldn't show up for work. Well, our office had prepared the way so that one of the people from our office along with a personnel representative of the plant would go out and find these boys, get them sobered up and encourage them to come back onto the job. They came back to work and stayed on the job but had that not been done they were either off to skid row or back to the reservation.

I understood the importance of having somebody help these kids over this first hump because I was a country boy and when I went to college even though only



thirty miles from home the boy who was going with me as my roommate wasn't able to go at the last minute and consequently I was among strangers and I have never been so lonesome in my life as I was that first three or four weeks. The Hocking Valley railroad which ran through the edge of Columbus used to whistle in every night about five o'clock and I can remember the mournful sound and as a matter of fact after about three or four weeks I went home with the idea of not going back to college because I didn't think I could take it.

I was never sure until after Christmas that I was going to stick it out. When I thought about my experience I thought about these Indian boys and what they were up against in the way of strange situations. I knew that we had to do a real all-out job to get everybody we could to help get the job done. Fortunately it did work because the relocation has gone ahead and I'm delighted about it.

### Summing Up The Indian Program

DSM: Under date of March 20, 1953, which was my last day in office, I addressed a memorandum to the Secretary of the Interior which summarizes what seemed to me to be the major problems then facing the bureau and the Indians. I believe the best way for me to tell this story is to quote from this particular memorandum.

"The number one problem is the problem of poverty, increasing populations and the relationship of population to resources and services in the Indian country. After visiting every Indian agency in the United States mainland and the territory of Alaska, with the exception of the Seminole agency in Florida, I find that I am more deeply concerned about these problems of poverty and increasing population in the Indian country and on Indian reservations than I am about any other problems. The problem has grown out of a number





of basic facts which need to be understood by the Indians themselves and by those who administer the program and by the public generally. Many reasons which lie behind the problem of poverty and over population at the many reservations today are too numerous to discuss here. Needless to say, some of the more obvious ones are the destruction or limitation of the Indians' primitive economy by the white man; the limitation of Indians over a period of many years to reservation life; the development throughout the years of the health program which has decreased the mortality rate especially of infants; the lack of migration from rural Indian country to industrial areas as compared with migration that has taken place in regard to all other rural people. Over fifty percent of the people in the United States in 1900 lived on farms while today less than fifteen percent live on farms. It is quite evident that the migration from Indian areas has not kept pace with the migration from other areas. For example, eight thousand Navajos were transferred from Fort Sumter to the Navajo reservation in 1868, and today there are approximately seventy to eighty thousand Navajo people living on the reservation or adjacent thereto.

"We have encouraged Indians to continue to live in areas where they can not possibly make a living by the provision of good schools, free health services, welfare payments and other means, rather than encouraging these populations to move into industrial or other areas where they could make an adequate living. The situation varies, of course, in the various reservations and tribes throughout the country. Some of the worst examples of poverty resulting from over population and limited submarginal land resources are to be noted in such areas as the cutover country in northern Wisconsin, Minnesota, Turtle Mountain, Fort Totten and Sisseton Reservations in North and South Dakota, and the drastically over populated arid lands of Navajo and Papago country in the Southwest.

"I have two specific recommendations regarding these problems: (1) I recommend that you ask Congress to increase appropriations for the placement and relocation program which this Bureau has demonstrated over the past two years is feasible and which will



decrease the cost to the government in two ways if carried forward. It will decrease the necessity for services in the way of schools, hospitals and other services now being provided mainly on the reservations. It will provide an opportunity for many Indians who cannot at present pay income taxes to make enough money so that they may pay income taxes and more than reimburse the government through the payment of such taxes for any cost involved in their relocation. Three years ago the Congress passed a bill which would authorize an eighty-eight million dollar rehabilitation program for the Navajo-Hopi tribe. Some twenty million dollars has already been appropriated to carry out the intent of this legislation and after studying the problem quite thoroughly I am deeply concerned about whether more schools and hospitals in the out of the way places on the Navajo reservation and in other areas are justified as against an all-out attempt to assist poverty stricken people to relocate in areas where they will have a chance to make a living. It would be my recommendation that you find someone, or perhaps two or three people of real ability and standing in the United States and make a restudy of the Navajo problem in terms of the possible effect of the long range program which is now getting under way. This group, in my opinion, should reconsider the question as to how many people can actually make a living on economic units, and use the range on the Navajo reservation and the question as to whether or not we will be building up a larger problem for the Navajo people and for the government twenty-five or thirty years from now if we continue to provide facilities, and free services to limited groups of people in out-of-the-way places instead of offering them opportunities in other areas. I am recommending someone from the outside to make this study because there is a great deal of emotion involved in this question and understandably so and therefore the problem should be considered by someone who can do it as objectively as possible.

The second area where we have problems has to do with the supervision of individual trust-alloted lands. This problem is a most serious one. The problem of supervision of individually owned trust-alloted lands



has become progressively worse since the Allotment Act of 1887 and there are now around sixteen or seventeen million acres of trust-allotted lands for which the Bureau of Indian Affairs has the responsibility. Some 3,067,000 or 3,068,000 million acres of this land is fractionated through deaths of original allottees and their heirs so that now six or more heirs have an interest in each of the 23,462 tracts that are involved in this acreage.

"Proposed legislation was sent to the Department (of Interior) last year but was not sent to the Congress. Similar legislation is now under review in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and should be followed up carefully and presented to the Congress at the earliest possible date in order to clean up this problem before it becomes completely impossible.

"Another acute problem in connection with the administration of individually allotted trust land is the fact that many of these lands are owned by highly competent Indians who insist on maintaining their lands in trusts. This insistence stems from the advantage they have in being free from property taxes and because under the policies and procedures that have been in existence throughout many years they have certain advantages such as: priorities in the purchase of other Indian lands; borrowing of tribal and Indian loan funds; and using other tribal resources without adequate payment. These privileges have been a valuable asset to these individuals. We have taken steps to correct part of this problem through the issuance of a new procedure under the date of February 29, 1952, a copy of which is attached which required a review in Washington of all proposed negotiated sales between tribal officers or people who had fee patents previously who were proposing to purchase lands from other Indians on a negotiated basis. The same procedure also required an appraisal within three months if negotiated sales were to be executed in any case. This procedure had been drastically criticized by some of the people who were affected by it.

"A comparatively few Indians of this type who were more competent in handling of real estate matters than most other people have taken up a great deal of the





time of our staff who deal with trust property. Some of these people are capable of making the Bureau of Indian Affairs appear as a group of paternalistic bureaucrats who will not allow them to handle their own affairs. At the same time however these same people refuse to accept trust free patents to all of their property when such an offer is made to them. The problem as to how to eliminate the trust in such cases is one which we have been exploring for some months and on which we still have not found the answer. Part of the answer probably lies in the review of treaties and in the length of the trust period in regard to these properties at present. It may require new legislation to help solve the problem. One thing that I am sure of is that the present competence bill before the Congress will not solve this particular problem, as it only deals with those Indians who voluntarily apply for patents. This will not bring under control those people who want to maintain their trust status.

"The third major areas in which problems occur has to do with the type of charter organization and business management required to safeguard the interest of the Indians and their tribal resources when the Bureau of Indian Affairs relinquishes its trusteeship responsibility. There is a wide variation among the two hundred or more groups, bands or tribes of Indians as to the kind or amount of tribal resources which they possess. There are perhaps twenty or twenty-five tribes that have enough resources to justify the establishment of a business management akin to a corporate structure and the hiring of a business manager or a managerial staff to supervise the continued operation of those assets. This problem is one of the most difficult problems that the department faces as it looks to the time of withdrawal of services by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"Many very important problems must be considered in working out a transfer of responsibility to the Indians themselves: The relationship of taxes, state and national and other taxes to the problem is an important one; the type of services now being rendered and how they can be continued if they are essential services without encouraging additional poverty and



increased population at the various reservations; the problem of land leasing as against assignments and many other complex problems which differ depending upon the treaties made in the past; legislation now in existence and the kind of resources, whether they are tribal lands or allotted lands or both. On several reservations a comparatively small number of tribal members are using the total resources of the reservation for the grazing of livestock or for other purposes and are not paying anything into the tribal treasury for the use of these resources. Consequently, the rest of the tribal members are not getting any direct return whatsoever from resources which belong to the tribe as a whole. This small number of tribal members would like to maintain the status quo because of the big advantage that they have. As a result they oppose any plan or program which would provide for the proper leasing of tribal lands and establishment of a corporation which would require a distribution of returns of resources for everyone and the withdrawal of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"I am attaching a copy of a proposed report on Senate 1014, a bill which would authorize a \$1500 per capita payment to each member of the Monominee tribe. This report attempts to set forward some of the items that should be considered soon before additional capital surpluses have been dissipated.

"We have hoped over the past several months to work out arrangements whereby we could get a special study of this problem with some outstanding people outside of the Department who might take six or eight sample areas and make an analysis of the problems involved. If such a study could be made with alternative recommendations as to how these problems can be met it would be helpful so that we might have a variety of patterns which might be applied under various conditions. We need these patterns as a basis for the type of organization, method of making distribution of dividends and many other questions that need to be answered.

"The fourth area that involves major problems has to do with the administration of the health program as it relates to Indians. The Bureau is now operating



some sixty hospitals and a number of clinics in addition. It is operating in the field of Public Health, preventive medicine in various communities where services are not otherwise available. It is quite clear to me that the Bureau should get out of the business of operating hospitals just as quickly as possible. It should transfer, if possible, all the public health functions to the states or communities involved. This is not easy because many of the states and counties are not equipped at the present time to do this type of work. Some progress has been made in closing out of hospitals and in transferring our responsibilities in this field to other agencies or community organizations. Additional progress can be made if a firm position is taken in the matter and if action is insisted upon.

"I am attaching a copy of a letter which was sent to certain field offices on February 18, 1953. Responses have been received and the information is available within the Bureau. I am also attaching a copy of a proposed report which has gone forward to your office on House Resolution 203 which provides for the transfer of all health services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the Public Health Service. I do not believe that this is an ideal solution because I do not believe that any Federal agency should have the continued responsibility over a long period of time for providing direct hospital services to Indians. However, I think the responsibility should be worked out so that Indians can get services of the same kind in community hospitals which serve the general population. Alternatively in areas where this is not feasible I would recommend that hospitals and facilities be transferred to states, counties or the territory of Alaska along with whatever Federal funds are necessary to assist in providing services to those Indians that need help.

"We have tried during this fiscal year to transfer our responsibility in the field of preventive medicine and public health work to states with the exception of one or two and have been unsuccessful because of the unwillingness on the part of the state or county officials to take over such responsibility or because of their feelings that they are not able to handle the responsibility properly.





"The fifth major area which has real problems involved has to do with education. A great deal of progress has been made over the past fifteen years in the transfer of responsibility for education to public schools in various states and to the territory of Alaska by entering into contracts under the Johnson-O'Malley Act. There are now fifty-two thousand Indian youngsters enrolled in public schools and about thirty-six thousand Indian youngsters enrolled in schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs of which twenty thousand are in boarding schools. I am attaching copies of two memoranda which were sent to all area directors. One dated March 21, 1952 and one dated February 19, 1953 which pretty well states the policy which we have been following over the past three years and to make some suggestions for further action. They provide the means for bringing together additional information needed in order to measure progress already made and to determine needed action. It is my recommendation that the Department continue to press toward the transfer of its responsibilities for direct educational operations to the local school districts or the state departments of education and also to encourage further use of boarding schools wherever this is feasible. I would also recommend transfer of these responsibilities to the local school districts or states in cases where boarding schools can not be eliminated. Progress in this field has been limited recently because of the unwillingness on the part of many of the school districts to take on the responsibility and because of the inability either legally or otherwise of the state departments of education to assume the responsibility. And finally because of the objection of Indian groups themselves to the transfer of this responsibility.

"The sixth problem area of importance has to do with maintenance of law and order. The Federal government throughout the years has had general responsibility for maintaining law and order in areas of Indian trust lands and has discharged this responsibility in cooperation with the Indian tribes themselves. Steps have been taken during the past three years looking to the transfer of this responsibility to the states in areas where agreement could be reached between the Indians, local or state officials, and the Bureau. Legislation is now pending which





would transfer both criminal and civil jurisdiction to the states in California, Oregon, Washington, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Nebraska. Some exceptions have been provided for in these bills because a few groups of Indians were not ready. Nevertheless, the Bureau came to the conclusion that the bill should go forward even with the exceptions and submitted them with the hope that amendments could be provided for at a later date.

"It is my recommendation that these bills be pressed and that further exploration be made in a number of other states immediately. In this latter category I would include Nevada where studies are already being made and in any other states where such a move would appear to be feasible. The matter of jurisdiction, of course, is closely related to land pattern, schools, credit programs and any other problems. It has been our judgment that more progress could be made by taking steps in those states where the Indians were ready and thus gaining some experience in problems involved in the transfer of such jurisdiction than could be made if we proposed an overall transfer in all of the states at one time.

"The seventh area where major problems exist has to do with the handling of the general supervision of lawyers who mislead Indians, well meaning organizations and the general public for their own personal gain. Over the past nearly three years we have learned first of all that there is nothing simple about the problem of Indians and Indian affairs. There are certain lawyers who learned this long before we did and have very effectively capitalized on the fact by getting themselves placed in positions where they could use certain organizations as their front. By use of propaganda, either directly or indirectly, the organizations have misled and confused both the public and the Indians involved. To be specific, James E. Curry has served as council for the National Congress for American Indians and through this relationship and other contacts has secured many Indian contracts as indicated in Senate Report No. 8. He has indulged in many practices including the dissemination of misinformation which has been harmful both to the Indians and to the public of the



United States. Mr. Felix Cohen four years before he left the Department served as a member of the board of directors of the Association of American Indians Affairs, which had headquarters in New York, and since 1948 he has served as its legal counsel. In my judgment he has used this organization as his front. He has either directly or indirectly put out falsehoods, distorted information and misrepresentation of the worst type while posing as an idealistic lawyer whose main interest lies in helping the Indian people. Actually Mr. Cohen has a very substantial personal financial stake in the Indian law business both in terms of direct representation of the Indian tribes for a fee and through his consultant fees from the joint efforts groups.

"Without discussing this problem at length I would refer you again to Senate Report No. 8 of the Eighty-second Congress and to a document which is attached containing extracts from an article which Mr. Cohen succeeded in having published in the Yale Law Review together with our comments. The document is voluminous necessarily so because of the fact that Mr. Cohen knows how to take complex questions and misstate them in such a way that it is difficult to explain to you or to the general public what the real facts are without rather extended and detailed analysis of the sequence of event that were involved in the various incidents to which he refers. It is quite apparent that Mr. Cohen because of his knowledge of the laws, regulations and procedures of the department, most of which he helped to formulate, is able to capitalize on any weak points in the laws, regulations, procedures to embarrass and discredit the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He has done so on numerous occasions. One of his techniques is to encourage so-called tribal leaders to ask for authority to expend their tribal funds and utilize their resources as they see fit without having the trusteeship responsibility removed from the shoulders of the Secretary of Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It has been evident that Mr. Cohen is very successful in aiding and abetting a group of alleged tribal leaders with a modicum of Indian blood, some of whom have exploited other tribal members who are less competent than they are, through shady real estate deals or utilization



of tribal funds to maintain themselves in power. He has also assisted them in bringing pressure on the Secretary of Interior and Congress to do things which are to their particular interest but not actually of interest to the tribal members as a whole. It is quite clear, from the information that we have developed, that Mr. Cohen is one of the prime movers, if not the prime mover, in the organization which Mr. Curry calls the Cohen Syndicate and which we call the "Joint Efforts Group" of lawyers who have twenty or more Indian claims contracts. This group is discussed in Senate Report No. 8 and further investigation of the group's activities is therein recommended. You will note that this joint efforts agreement approach by the department produced some of the least favorable contracts from the Indian standpoint and all the claim contracts and agreements have been negotiated with the help of Mr. Cohen prior to my appointment as Commissioner. I might add that Mr. Cohen, at the time of my status as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, was receiving around \$20,000 a year as consultant for this particular group of lawyers even though presumably he didn't have contracts of this type himself. I am sure that he had an interest in these contracts in addition to getting his consultant fees.

"The eighth area that I would like to talk briefly about has to do with the reorganization proposals in relation to the Bureau. A few months before I became Commissioner of Indian Affairs the Bureau underwent a major reorganization. Area offices had just been established and the Bureau was starting to try to straighten out its lines of authority. Some Indian groups and many people who make a living out of deploring the plight of the poor Indian immediately asked me after my appointment to reorganize the Bureau again. I personally made a quick survey of the situation and although I was not completely sold on every aspect of the previous reorganization I decided not to make any further drastic changes. I reached this decision partly because the Bureau had had many previous reorganizations and the morale of the personnel was very poor but even more importantly because the Indians and our personnel were confused on lines of authority and responsibility. Shortly after I decided that it would not be desirable to undertake any major





reorganization a private management firm, the Booz-Allen Hamilton Management group, which had been hired by the Secretary to make management studies within the Department of Interior reported on our organization. Their report indicated the desirability of maintaining the present type of area set up with some minor changes most of which have been made subsequently. There continues to be a great deal of criticism against the area offices and much of this is inherent in the problem itself. We have attempted to delegate the maximum amount of the Commissioner's authority to the area offices for final decision in most problems affecting the daily life of the Indians. The area offices are the ones that have to say no to the many pressure groups that are attempting to defraud or mislead the Indians. Previously the NO had to come from the Washington office with many many months of delay and duplication of effort. I strongly recommend that before making any major reorganization which would eliminate the area office set-up, that you make a thorough study of the situation. It has taken almost three years to complete the realignment of delegations and to secure a clear-cut line of command and to prepare a manual of procedures that is a clear-cut procedural operative manual. Any major disturbance in this line of command would cause great confusion both to the Indians and to the Bureau and to the Department personnel for a period of at least two years.

"Area nine that has some problems involved that should be considered has to do with proposed legislation. Several weeks ago I discussed with you the question as to how we should handle the so-called California-Western Oregon Withdrawal Bills which were introduced in the last session of Congress by Senators Watkins and Anderson. The Oregon Bill was Senate 3004 and the California Bill was Senate 3005. These bills were prepared within the department and one or two revisions need to be made in the California bill. They have not been introduced in this session of Congress. In accordance with our recent conversation, the Oregon bill was discussed with Senator Cordon and it was indicated that he wished to study the matter to see whether he would introduce it. This matter is still in his hands. The California bill was discussed with Senator Knowland's office and we have had no report as to



whether he desires to introduce this bill. This matter should be followed up closely and presented in this Congress if possible in order that the withdrawal program can proceed on schedule in these states. Certain other withdrawal proposals with regard to four or five other tribes, bands or groups of Indians will probably be ready within the next thirty to sixty days that should be considered and sent forward to Congress for action.

"Area ten has to do with some general comments that I would like to make before leaving the office of Commissioner. I was asked to take the job as Commissioner of Indian Affairs three different years beginning in the fall of 1947, again in 1948 and finally in the spring of 1950. I did not accept the job on the first two occasions because I knew something about the complexities of the problems involved and had some doubt as to whether I could do an adequate job with the tools at hand and when it was offered to me in the spring of 1950 I made it quite clear to the Secretary that I felt very strongly that the Bureau of Indian Affairs should get out of business as quickly as possible but that the job must be done with honor. I secured agreement before accepting the job on many points which I thought were essential if we were to get the job done. I believe for example that we should proceed with intensive programming operations with the Indian tribes. I have found during my term as Commissioner that a great majority of the Indians are opposed to having the Bureau get out of business. This is particularly true of those Indians who are profiting through the exploitation of their less competent neighbors. There are also many older Indians who feel insecure about the matter. I was a bit surprised to find that the feeling was so nearly unanimous and that there were only a few groups so far who have been willing to agree with the government on immediate withdrawal, or for that matter on discussing a definite plan for withdrawal at some time in the future. One of them is the Grand Ronde Siletz, a group in Oregon which you know about. In addition there are a number of groups and individuals ordinarily identified as friends of the Indians who are definitely opposed to any withdrawal action. Foremost are the lawyers such as James E. Curry, and Felix Cohen



and the Association on American Indian Affairs and the National Congress on American Indians.

"In addition to the lawyers whom I have mentioned serving as legal counsel for the Association of American Indian Affairs and the National Congress for American Indians, there are some other people in groups many of whom are very good people who do not understand the complexities of this problem and have thus opposed action in relation to withdrawal. This has been evidenced by the fact that a strong attack was made on this office following the issuance of a memorandum of August 5, 1952, a copy of which is attached.

"Also attached is a copy of a letter sent out to all tribes by Mr. Frank George, the executive director of the National Congress for American Indians, and copies of our letter and memorandum sent out as follow up to Mr. George's letter and a copy of the statement released by Mr. John Collier. I believe these documents will give you some understanding of what you face if you consider them along with the documentation that we have prepared with reference to the recent article presented by Felix Cohen and which is also attached to this memorandum. I think my record will bear out the fact that I believe very strongly that time is past due when many Indians should be released from all types of Federal supervision. While I have pointed out that many Indians do not wish this, I strongly feel that the trusteeship and other special forms of government services to the Indians are holding the Indians back politically, socially, and economically. The Bureau is ready to prepare proposals or has proposals in process in regard to many tribes similar to those that have been prepared on California and the Grande Ronde Siletz in Oregon. In order to implement these proposals and for the benefit of the Indians a strong hand will have to be taken both by the Department and Congress. There are many other bits of evidence which I could supply but this memorandum is already too long. I am sorry I had to present this problem in this manner but I am sure that you will understand that I am trying to be helpful in giving you some of the experience that we have gained over the past nearly three years which I hope will be of some help to you and my successor."





### Lack Of Public Understanding Of The Indian Problem

DSM: During the past few years there has been approximately half of the states of the United States with an Indian population for which the Bureau of Indian Affairs had some responsibility. This, of course, includes the state of Alaska which has come in as a state in recent years and which was not only responsible for the Indians there but for native people such as Eskimos, Aleuts, etc. Most of these states, of course, lie west of the Mississippi River mainly because the eastern Indians were moved west by the Federal Government many, many years ago and established in Oklahoma in the then Indian territory.

If they didn't move, they stayed on and hid out in certain other areas such as Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, North and South Carolina. The Eastern Seaboard states and the Northeastern states of the United States probably have seventy-five thousand or one hundred thousand people of Indian blood most of whom are not under the supervision of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Agreements were reached between the State of New York and the Federal Government many years ago, and the same is true of the State of Maine, whereby the states took over the supervision of the Indian lands and the Indian reservations so that the responsibility no longer lies with the Federal Government in those areas. Most of the Indians in the other Eastern States are part of the general population and do not live on lands that formerly belonged to the Indians, but are integrated into the population generally.

We had a great deal of pressure during my regime to accept a group in South Carolina back into the Federal fold because some of the goodwill people felt that they weren't being properly treated and that they needed protection. We did not feel that this was the way to give them the kind of protection they should have, so we opposed the bringing them in again.

The American Indian is often thought of by many people in the United States as a rural person and as a





consequence they consider American Indians to be farmers. This was not generally true. The only Indians who did extensive farming were, the Pueblo and Hopi Indians in the New Mexico-Arizona area, who had received their grants of land from the Spanish conquistadors many many years ago and who were able to carry on undisturbed for a great many years in their farming operations. These people really knew how to do dry land farming as well as irrigated farming. Outside of these however the forest Indians of the East and North and the Plains Indians of the Midwest and the fishing Indians of the Northwest did practically no farming and any farming that was done by these Indian groups was done by squaws, who simply raised patches of squash to dry, corn which could be used as meal, and used as a part of their pemican which was made from buffalo meat, berries and many other things which they packed together into a kind of a combination of meat, grain and fruit that they could slice down all winter long. So it was a misconception that Indians could be set up on a reservation; provided with horses, wagons and a blacksmith; plows and a few other tools and that they could make their own way. They had no idea how to go about it.

Finally an agriculture extension service was established to assist the Indians in carrying out their operations, and there are today some pretty good Indian farmers. Most of them are ranchers instead of farmers. They do pretty well at taking care of cattle and looking after the ranching phases of the program. As a matter of fact one of the problems on many of the reservations is that a few smart Indians have bought cattle and turned them loose. They have herded them and looked after them without paying any range fees and as a consequence the poorer tribe members are not getting out of it what they should.



### Many Indians Are Still Primitive

DSM: Most Indians, of course, were primitive people who lived by hunting, fishing and by use of small tracts of land for production of corn and squash and that type of food. They lived the life of the nomad, because they moved from place to place and many of the tribes lived in part by poaching on the richer tribes and stealing their produce. The Navajos, for example, before the Civil War, got most of their food by waiting until the Pueblos had harvested their crops and then they moved in and stole them. The Apaches did much of the same thing in the Southwest. So there were many, many tribal wars that went on throughout the years before they were put on reservations. They fought for various causes: trying to take over each others' land, trying to take over each others' women, trying to take over anything else of value. They were quite primitive.

It was only in the late 1880's that the Indian Wars between the troops of the United States and the Indians came to an end. Some of the latter wars were the Sioux wars in which Custer and his army were killed off; and the Apache wars in the Southwest. The Apaches were finally taken to Oklahoma and put into compounds and practically ruined because they were supplied beef and other things and had absolutely nothing to do. They had been a very active people, of course, who poached on other Indians and who poached on white people but they were put behind bars, not exactly bars, but fences and guarded. They spent years there and became about as low in their living habits as anybody can possibly imagine. So up until sometime after the turn of the century there wasn't very much interest on the part of the American people generally in trying to bring the Indian into the civilized life of the so-called whites, or I should say maybe the so-called civilized whites, because most of the whites who had an interest in Indians were interested in exploiting them, taking over their lands, pushing them off of their lands, or some other type of exploitation. Even in some areas they were used as slaves, back in the old days.



It was only after about 1920 that a much more humane attitude began to develop, so it has been only over the last forty or fifty years at the outside that much has been done about: 1, stopping the exploitation; 2, providing sound educational facilities; and 3, encouraging Indians with ability not only to learn the ways of the white man but to enter into professional types of activities which have been the normal development of people in rural communities generally.

One of the problems had been that Indians were put on reservations and weren't even allowed to vote until the late 1940's. I must add that Felix Cohen helped to carry the battle on that on the right side of the fence and did help to get the vote for American Indians for which he should be given credit, in contrast to his negative contribution to the Indian problem.

There has not been much outstanding contribution made by Indian individuals in terms of what we think of today as statesmanship, professional activities, or business activities. This doesn't mean that there aren't any highly intelligent Indians because there are, but unfortunately because of the fact that they, most of them, do live on reservations that are under the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the smart Indians have learned to vie with each other in handling tribal business and being the Indian politicians and many of them who are interested in this kind of activity exploit their poorer neighbors. It hasn't been a very pretty story.

There have been people, of course, among the Indian tribes even before they were moved out of the south, among the so-called civilized tribes, who were very erudite and well educated people. One of the Cherokee Indians who was moved to Oklahoma, for example, developed a written language for the Cherokees which they had never had. This was an important contribution, and there were many similar contributions of this type. American history is full of information about some of the great old chiefs who knew how to lead their warriors and to deal with the whites but not in the modern way.





## The Future For American Indians

DSM: At present time I'm most hopeful that over the next hundred years, seventy-five years, fifty years and even twenty-five years in many respects there will be Indians who will be emerging as active people in politics, as lawyers and doctors and professional people of various types, because nowadays many of them are going to the same schools as white people are, and they are getting the opportunity to go to college. We do have one Indian who is a Congressman from the Dakotas and perhaps we will have others moving up within the foreseeable future.

As I look back over the problems involved in working with the Indians, in my job as Chief of the Bureau of Indian Affairs there are a number of different areas that need to be discussed.

First of all, many of the problems, if not most of the problems, stem from things that had happened in past history. There has been a tendency, for example, for people who lived in the eastern part of the United States to think that all Indians were farmers when it just wasn't true. The only Indians who were farmers were the Hopis and the Puebloans in the Southwest who were pretty good farmers and to try to adapt the program on the various reservations, once the Indians were placed on reservations, to the kind of a program that the white man had been carrying out in the way of an economic program was not only a difficult task but an impossible task from the standpoint of getting acceptance on the part of most of the Indians.

I have already mentioned my visit to the Sisseton area in North and South Dakota where the land had been allotted to both Indians and whites following the passage of the Allotment Act in 1887. The white people had the good sense to come in and pick the kind of land they were accustomed to farming, while the Indians, having had the kind of economy that was based upon hunting, fishing and the forest type of existence, picked the hill lands and the scrub lands. As a result they have nothing left today because the game is



all gone, the fish is all gone, the population has increased, and consequently there is nothing but a big poor-house type of area in that particular territory. That is true in a number of reservations. Unfortunately, when Indians were placed on reservations they were generally placed in areas where the white man didn't want to farm, didn't want to live. They were put on scab lands and rough lands or in some cases forested lands. In some cases this turned out to be fortunate for the Indians, because there are two or three reservations that I can think of that have excellent forests which nowadays are providing a good income to the Indians. The Monominies of Wisconsin, the Klamath Indians of Oregon and some of the Indians in other parts of the country still have some pretty fair forest lands because at the time that they were placed on these lands forests were available rather generally and the white man wasn't so interested in virgin timber in the areas where Indians lived.

Eastern Indians had a basic economy based upon water, forest, and game; the Midwestern Indians' economy was based largely upon the buffalo and the picking of berries and other fruits that were found to supplement the food and clothing that they got from the buffalo; the Northwest Indians were fishermen and the Pueblos, as already mentioned, were farmers. We the people of the United States throughout the years pulled the rug out from under all the Indians, except the Pueblos, by destroying their economy through cutting down forests, eliminating game, killing off the buffalo or building dams so that the Northwest fishermen had great difficulty in finding the kind of fishing spots that they once enjoyed.

The Indian owned the whole land in the sense that they had occupied the land, with no white man on the continent, until Columbus arrived. The reservations were set aside for their use and in some cases a much larger area was set aside than they now have. For example in western South Dakota where a very large area was set aside for the use of the Sioux gold was discovered in the area where the Indians had been relocated and the white man found a way to beat the Indians out of the land on which there was gold, or



it was suspected there was gold. The Indians were moved into more and more limited areas.

This sort of thing went on, and the thing that is most difficult today is the fact that the Indians generally who are under the trusteeship arrangement with the Bureau of Indian Affairs have lived chiefly on reservations and as a consequence they are insecure when they move into any other area.

In the case of the Indian, because he is used to associating with his own kind, he has had very little association with the outside world, and when he moves out of the reservation very often he wants to go back fairly soon because he feels quite insecure otherwise. So one of the biggest problems facing the Government is to assist the Indian in moving into the main stream of American life and breaking that pattern of isolation. Reservation life leads to a continuation of certain old ways of life and nowadays leads to a welfare type of state for the simple reason that there is not enough work available in many of the reservation areas. So poverty, problems of relocation, problems of education, problems of health and sanitation all go more or less hand in hand.

Poverty basically is a very great problem to which we in the United States have contributed throughout the years and like many people who are living in the slums of the cities the educational facilities may be there but they are not utilized as well as in certain other areas.

Sanitation also becomes a very real problem--in fact there is a whole complex of problems which have grown out of the fact that people who have not yet moved into what we think of as the civilized world are at the same time expected to do the things which they have not learned to do in their early environment.

As a result of all this, they have been exploited not only by the white man in taking over the more valuable lands, lands that had developed oil and gold, but they have also been exploited in more recent years by their own Indian politicians. Every tribe that I had





any experience with had some smart, sharp Indians who lived pretty largely off of the exploitation of poorer Indian neighbors. Unfortunately the Indian politicians have learned all of the bad tricks of their compatriot politicians and not too many of the good tricks, so nowadays the control of Indians by other Indians is a very real problem.

### Indian Claims

DSM: The Indian lawyer problem is very closely associated with the problem of the Indian politicians, because the lawyers very often worked with the politicians and give them every break possible in order to have their support in order to maintain their legal business, whether it was claims work or some other more general type of legal activity. This has been one of the very real problems throughout the years and certainly throughout the recent years, when Indian claims are being presented to the Indian Claims Commission.

During the 1940's an Indian Claims Bill was passed. It was presented by the then Senator O'Mahoney from Wyoming who said he wanted to get away from the individual claims that were coming up from time to time and having to face them individually so he prepared a bill and the bill was passed which set up a Indian Claims Commission of three people who were expected to receive applications for claims and to have the hearings held and claims settled by the early 1950's. As a matter of fact the Indian Claims Commission is still in existence; three new members were recently appointed as of December 1967. At the time of these appointments it was stated that they hoped to complete all the claims by 1972; it goes on and on.

Many of the Indians have already gotten settlements of millions of dollars in claims which is generally divided among the tribesmen. Sometimes the





money doesn't last long when that happens.

The problem of planning for the withdrawal of the services of the Bureau was one of the very real problems that we tackled during my regime. There was strong opposition from the so-called Indian Associations and also from the Indian politicians, because frankly they have a good thing going. As a consequence we got very little cooperation on the part of the tribal leaders and others to try to work out plans which would look toward the final independence of the Indians if they did want to live on the reservations, handle their own business or have it put under some other kind of a trust; or to move out and move into other areas into professional and skilled jobs.

### Are The Indians A Dying Race?

DSM: The question is "Are the Indians on the way out as a people?" or "Will they continue to be Indians in the sense of recognized type of people?" This is the American Indian that we are talking about. I think the Indians are on the way out as a separate or isolated people, but it may take hundreds of years. I feel quite strongly that integration is already in process. It will increase as communications between Indians and the outside public increases and it will speed up, I think, from here on out.

The old rites that were practiced by the Indians in initiating young men into the tribe are going out of existence pretty fast. I remember of talking to some of the old people among the Pueblos who were bemoaning the fact that many of their youngsters were not going through the process of earning their right to be accepted members of the tribe way back in 1950 or 1951 when I was Commissioner. I am sure that this problem of loss of interest on the part of the young people and maintaining the old rites is going to be a factor in the integration process. Some of them



have gone out as various types of workers in Pueblo country. It is one of the few places where the economy was not wrecked by the white man for the reason that the Spanish conquistadors when they came in made peace with the Indians and assigned large tracts of land which were the lands that they had been using for their continued use and they still have them.

The problem today, however, is that during the last twenty-five years or fifty years with better health facilities, with the decrease in the death rate among babies and youngsters, the population in these areas as the population in most other parts of the country has increased so much that there is not enough land for these people to maintain their tribal units without having some of the people go outside to work. This going outside to work is a factor. Many of the Pueblo Indians go out now as younger people, work outside for some years and when they retire they come back to live in the Pueblo or near the Pueblo where they can be near their family and friends.

The economy of the Pueblos was the only that had not been wrecked and even it is changing drastically now mainly because of the fact that there are just too many people to live on the limited areas assigned to them years ago.

Incidentally, I think that there is no Pueblo with the possible exception of the Hopi, whose youngsters are not going into the public schools under contract nowadays, rather than having separate schools, which of course is a factor in the integration process.

When I was asked during the time that I was Commissioner how long I thought it would be before the Indian Bureau could withdraw and get out of business I always refused to give an answer, because there were too many factors to consider to make an estimate. For example, getting out of the Navajo reservation where there are now probably about eighty thousand people who have been living a life of nomads and sheep herders and who until recently at least eighty percent of them did not speak the English



language is an entirely different problem than the problem of the Pueblos. Each tribal situation is different.

In Oklahoma for example where reservations were eliminated many years ago there are still two area offices rendering services to Indians in Oklahoma, yet they are not on reservations but on their own private lands, some of them communal, but most of them individually owned. It is well known that some of the Oklahoma Indians are rich because of the oil strikes in the oil country of Oklahoma.

#### Five Hundred Years Hence

DSM: I have said many times that five hundred years from now we probably will not have an Indian problem in the sense of having a separate group of people. Many of the Indians who have not lived in reservations throughout many many years now in the eastern part of the United States are pretty well integrated. In addition to other types of integration there is a great deal of intermarriage between whites and Indians and in the Carolina countries there has been considerable intermarriage between Negroes and Indians so that many of the Cherokees from that area have both Indian and Negro blood. It is obvious that this process of gradual absorption into the general pattern of the country will inevitably continue, although it is slow due to isolation at the reservation level, problems of fear and insecurity when they move off the reservation. This is being changed by the fact that the Bureau of Indian Affairs is now trying to provide assistance to young people in particular who do move off, to see that they get the kind of help they need and the kind of association that will keep them reasonably happy and secure.





### Looking Back At The Indian Affairs Assignment

DSM: In spite of all of the battles that we waged with the associations who are presumably working in behalf of the Indians, with Indian lawyers, and with a former Commissioner, my service as Commissioner of Indian Affairs was a most interesting one. I visited all of the agencies with one exception. The agency in Florida I didn't visit because I didn't want to go down during the wintertime and be charged with traveling on government funds to get a Florida vacation! However, I have visited the Seminoles in Florida as a private individual. The Seminoles are scattered around the state now, having hidden out for a great many years in order to keep from being moved from that area into the Indian territory in Oklahoma where most of the Seminoles and the five other so-called civilized tribes were moved.

There are still Cherokees in North Carolina, and some other tribes in Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana and a fairly large group of Seminoles in Florida. I didn't realize until after I became Commissioner that most of the Seminoles had been moved and there are a large group of Seminoles in Oklahoma along with the other tribes that were moved out there.

One of the big battles that we had continuously during the time that I was Commissioner was the battle to keep the record straight as far as the officers of the Indian Associations were concerned. The Association of American Indian Affairs sent out their executive officer every summer to visit many of the reservations in the West and to cook up stories of neglect, of ineptness on the part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and any kind of stories that would touch the hearts of people, in order to raise money. We recognized very quickly after the first round of these that these stories appeared in the newspapers under the name of Oliver LaFarge who was President of the Association.

He didn't go out to pick up the stories but he could write well and after the information was provided to him the papers published his material because



he was a well known writer. We began to rebutt these statements and when people wrote in to ask us about the truth of the matter we took the time and went to the effort to get all of the information available on the question and mailed it out to them. I remember one case of an individual out in Denver who had been subscribing twenty-five dollars or fifty dollars a year to the American Association of Indian Affairs for some time who wrote in and we wrote him fully, a three or four page letter, in response to one of these articles that had appeared. We got a letter back from him in which he said that he had sent his last money. He had believed what they had said and he had never heard the other side of the story and he was delighted to have it. Naturally this kind of thing didn't make us friends of the people who were trying to raise money and of the people who were doing it by using the Bureau as a whipping boy for their money raising operation.

One other incident that I remember, the Congress of American Indians was one of those that was always picking at the Bureau and was finding ways and means to dig up so called dirt and spread it around. They also tried to have a hand in running the operations of the Bureau to suit themselves, and I remember quite distinctly attending a meeting in Philadelphia of a group of people from the Association of American Indian Affairs, the Congress of American Indians and two or three other smaller organizations. The question was raised as whether or not we had decided to continue to have an advisory council to advise with the Commissioner. I knew something of the history of the past advisory council and I hadn't made up my mind whether I was going to continue it and I had made this statement when Ruth Muskrat Bronson, who was one of the most active of the Congress of American Indians group, spoke up and she was supported by the Association of American Indian Affairs executive officer in which she said "We think you should have a council and furthermore we don't think you should make any policy decisions without consultation with the council."

I immediately said, "Well I can give you an answer to that one. Policy decisions often need to be made four or five times a week. The council would not be



available I am sure when these decisions had to be made and I don't intend to handicap my job as Commissioner and to tie down my responsibilities in such a way that I turn it over to somebody else to make my decisions." Well, this didn't make me very popular, but nevertheless it was the kind of thing that we had to deal with. By the way, one of the old time Commissioners, one of the Quakers who was Commissioner back in the late 1920s, was at that meeting and he nearly nodded his head off when I gave this answer and he stood up immediately and told the group that he thought I was right; that nobody could run the show if he was expected to call somebody in every time he made a decision. This was typical of the kind of thing that we had to buck.

These interest groups have been carried on throughout the years because a lot of well-to-do people have salved their consciences by contributing money to Indian work. There is a rather large group of Quakers who are interested because the Quakers at one time operated many of the reservations and did it practically free of charge because they were interested in seeing that these people got the right kind of treatment. Unfortunately the Quaker organization that now exists, or did when I was Commissioner, have fallen for the same sort of pattern that developed several years ago of insisting that no Indian lands be sold or disposed of.

One of the men who came in from Oklahoma to work with the Interior Department in the area of oil was a Vice President of the Phillips Oil Company. He happened to be chairman of one of the Oklahoma tribes. He was perhaps one-sixteenth Indian, but any Indian blood will qualify you as an Indian in Oklahoma, and there is nobody in Oklahoma that I know of who isn't proud to have some Indian blood. He had told me that he didn't think any Indian lands should be sold, so I invited him to come down and spend an hour with me sometime when he had time, which he did.

I pointed out to him that the Indian lands that I had seen in Oklahoma were the poorest farm lands in Oklahoma and that to insist that they hold on to those lands and try to make a living off them was not in the





interest of the Indians and if they thought Indians should be farming and if Indians wanted to farm they should be given the type of credit and the type of support which they needed to go out and buy good farm lands, as most other farmers would do, and not be required to hold on to the old post oak, or scrub oak lands which they were trying to operate as farms in eastern Oklahoma and in other parts of the United States. Well, I went through the whole process. I told him about the Sissiton experience which I have mentioned where the Indians when they had a chance to take allotments had selected land that was poor farming land because it had game and fish and now had none. I convinced him. I found out later however, that the pressures were so great on him that he reversed himself again but at the time I convinced him.

This idea of not selling Indian lands goes back to the days when the Indians did lose lands that white men wanted because it had oil or it had gold or it had something else that was really valuable or it was good farming land. There was exploitation, there is no question about it, but that exploitation has been pretty well over for quite some time because the Bureau of Indian Affairs has set up provisions for helping to protect the Indian trust lands. The matter of holding onto lands just because they are Indian lands is one that has developed into a real problem.





## CHAPTER XIV

## CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION AND I LEAVE THE GOVERNMENT

DSM: In 1952 General Eisenhower was elected to the Presidency. It is the tradition that on the first of January after an election when there is a change in political parties, every one who has been a Presidential Appointee, submits his resignation to his department or to his superior officer. Among others, of course, I submitted my resignation.

I heard nothing from it until the thirteenth of March, some weeks after the President had been inaugurated. On that date I got a letter signed by the President saying that my services would be discontinued upon March 20, one week hence. I got a call from Orme Lewis who was Assistant Secretary, who had been appointed in the meantime, telling me that it was coming and he apologized and said "I'm sorry that I had to give you this message." Incidentally I found out later that former Governor McKay who had become Secretary had recommended that I be continued, but the Republican National Committee who were riding high in the saddle didn't want anybody of the old regime. So out I went.

I might add that I doubt very much whether President Eisenhower even read the letter that he signed because he is the only man that I had known before he became President and I knew him and his brother Milton quite well and I am sure that he signed dozens of letters that came across his desk without looking at them at that time in order to go along with the Republican National Committee.

I regretted having to leave in the midst of a program that I thought was worthwhile; on the other hand I knew it was coming, and I had no ill feelings then and I have no ill feelings today, because of the fact that I was fired. I might say that part of the pressure for the change came from the Association of



American Indian Affairs and the Congress of American Indians. In view of what I have said here about my relationship with these associations it wasn't surprising that they didn't want me to continue as Commissioner; but it was an interesting experience. I wouldn't have missed it for a great deal. I learned a great deal not only about Indians but about human nature in general and one of the things that I learned was that there are more experts in the field of Indian affairs than in any other field that I know of in the United States of America.

#### I Become A Civil Service Retiree

DSM: The job as Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs was my last full time job with the government. During the fall of 1953 I became a civil service retiree at age sixty-two. Before reviewing my activities from that time to the present, (1969) I would like to reminisce about some people and experiences that contributed to my development and education and to philosophize a bit about things I have learned throughout my years of public service.

#### Congressional Friends And Political Contacts During My Career In Government

DSM: During the seventeen years or more that I was appearing before Congressional Committees and making almost daily contact with members of the Senate and the House, I learned to know some wonderful people who were occasionally demanding but usually were most helpful.



Senator Carl Hayden

DSM: Among those was Carl Hayden who in 1968 was the Dean of the U.S. Senate. He was nearly ninety years old but he still had his faculties and was still the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Carl Hayden was one of the best politicians that I have ever worked with. I remember quite distinctly after having a visit with him in company with Leland Barrows back during the days when I was Director of the W.R.A. Leland said "He is the kind of a person that a politician ought to be. He takes people from over on the right, people from over here on the left and brings them together here in the middle." In other words he is always looking for a compromise.

I shall always remember one of those problems that he faced. He didn't quite know what to do to resolve it but he finally figured out the answer. During the days of the War Relocation Authority the people in the Salt River Valley of Arizona were quite concerned for fear that a lot of the Japanese Americans were going to settle there and they didn't like the prospective competition. There were a few Japanese Americans already there and they knew that the competition was something that they didn't want to face. So they hired a so-called public relations man who was not very ethical. They put on quite a campaign against the Japanese Americans and stirred things up to the point where it began to worry Senator Hayden and of course it worried me. We already had two relocation centers in Arizona, one near Parker, on the western side of the state, and one that we called Gila in the Gila Indian Reservation a few miles out of Phoenix. Carl Hayden talked to me about it a number of times and finally when General McNarney who represented the Army before the Appropriations Committee at that time, appeared before them he took up the question with him. General McNarney just brushed it off. It wasn't something that he had anything to do with so he didn't do anything.

So Carl Hayden waited until the Congress adjourned for that session. Then he went down to the White





House and saw President Roosevelt and he asked the President to send the Inspector General of the Army down to Phoenix. He told him what he wanted him to do was to establish himself in the Westward Ho Hotel and to call in the leaders of this group down there one by one and to get real tough with them and to let them know that the U.S. Government felt that they were interfering with the war effort.

The Inspector General came over to see me to get the lay of the land. I gave it to him and I said "Of course, you have talked to Senator Hayden." He smiled and said "Yes, I have talked with Senator Hayden." So they went to Phoenix and established themselves in the hotel and they called these men in from out of the Salt River Valley, and they really scared them. We had no more trouble in the Salt River Valley. They just piped down and everything went beautifully. Of course, they never knew that Carl Hayden had any part in this business and we never told anybody while he was still in the Senate.

He was always the kind of person who was representing his people and he pressed for things that he thought they wanted. He seldom made a request in which he said "It must be done." He simply proposed it, and if we had very good reason against it he'd say "Well give me a letter that I can send out to my constituents about it, giving your explanation." I have a tremendous regard for Carl Hayden the man in the Senate who seldom made a speech on the floor but did his work in committees and behind the scenes. He is greatly respected and loved by the people who have worked with him.

#### Senator Clinton Anderson

DSM: Another chap from that part of the world that I have learned to know quite well is Clinton Anderson who came first to the House of Representatives from



New Mexico. At that time I was connected with the Soil Conservation Service and it was suggested by our Regional Director, Hugh Calkins, that we get in touch with the new Congressman from New Mexico and fill him in on the conservation program. I was elected to do this. I called him up, made a date and went up to see him. He wasn't too busy so he put his feet up on a bench and leaned back and said "Tell me about it." We must have spent two hours together. He was interested both in New Mexico and South Dakota, which was his home state. He had moved to New Mexico because as a younger man he had developed tuberculosis and he thought that was a better place for him to live.

After I had filled him in on a lot of information he wanted about soil erosion, water control, and related matters, he asked me to send him all the literature that we had that had a bearing on his part of the world and on South Dakota. This was my first introduction but I saw a great deal of Clinton Anderson in later years. I got quite well acquainted with him during the period in the House and later I got much better acquainted with him as a Senator. During the days when I was Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs we had trouble with some of the so-called Indian lawyers who were always a thorn in the flesh. We talked to Clint Anderson about it so he set up a series of hearings. He practically chased one of them out of business with our help which we were very happy about. This lawyer's name was Jim Curry. He had gathered up a great many contracts on Indian claims for presentation before the Claims Commission, by having the help of an Indian organization for which he was the lawyer go out and get him these jobs. He had them all the way from Alaska to the Southwest and across the country and I'm sure that ultimately he probably made a million dollars out of it because he sold his interest in these to somebody else for twenty-five percent interest and as these claims began to become due he got a large return out of it without doing much about it.

I remember one other incident to show how the mind of a good politician works. One of the Pueblo groups in New Mexico had an excellent deposit of gravel and there were several people who were interested in



getting in on this gravel for construction work. There was one chap who was already using gravel from this place, by the name of Loudermilk. There was another group who moved in and who got Senator Chavez's brother to serve as their attorney. They put the pressure on us to let them take over an exclusive contract. We weren't willing to do this; but the pressure got very heavy. So I went up one day and talked to Senator Anderson. I said "Senator, we have no interest in pushing Mr. Loudermilk out, but we have an interest in dividing up this gravel down there so that we can not only take the pressure off but to give these Pueblo people an opportunity to make the most they can out of it." He looked at me and said "I don't care what you do as long as you let Loudermilk continue to have gravel." So we let about five people in with a contract that provided for a somewhat higher price. We put the money in the tribal fund for the Indians. But this again is typical of a man who is willing to compromise. We had great support from him and I shall always remember the good relationships I have had with Clinton Anderson.

#### Senator Richard Russell

DSM: Another Senator whom I worked with for a number of years and for whom I have a very high regard is Richard Russell of Georgia. While Richard Russell and I do not hold the same philosophy in many respects including the race problem we did get along very well in the days when I was a member of the staff of the Soil Conservation Service. He supported our program at that time and he was a very strong supporter of the Farm Security program and most of the other New Deal programs. During those days I could go to his office at any time that I wished for a conference with him, to get his advice which I very often did. At that time he was Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee. He always handled our appropriation hearing. After the first year with S.C.S., I presented the





detailed information about our budget and consequently we saw a good deal of each other. Dick Russell is one of the top politicians in my opinion. With his friends, he is a man of honor. He never pressed us to do something that was impossible.

At one stage we had a chap on the rolls from Georgia in the fairly early days of the Soil Conservation Service who wasn't producing and we told our regional director, that he could get rid of him. This word came back to Richard Russell and he called me up and said "Dillon, I have got to have that man on the payroll." I said "All right, Dick. We have got to have him off within a reasonable time. How long do you have to have him?" He said "Three months." I said "We'll keep him three months." At the end of three months we dropped him. This was the kind of relationship that we had and it was wonderful. We could talk to each other on first name basis and we understood each other.

#### Senator Mike Mansfield

DSM: Mike Mansfield, the present Majority Leader of the Senate, is another great man in my opinion. I had more contact with Mike when he was a member of the House than I have had since he became a member of the Senate. I have only seen him occasionally in recent years because I have not been in Government.

During the time he was a member of the House he was a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. When I was President of the Institute of Inter-American Affairs it was important that we get a new charter. The one we had only lasted another year. I went up and talked with the acting chairman of the committee, Congressman Richards, and he said "I'm favorable and I would like to do something about it, and I'll be glad to appoint a sub-committee to have hearings on the matter. Whom would you like as chairman?" I said "Mike Mansfield." So he made Mike Mansfield chairman, and we had a good





sub-committee. We got our charter through the House and we got it through the Senate. We had a very close working relationship. Here again I could always stop in to see him at any time. In the days when I was Director of the War Relocation Authority when I occasionally needed counsel about what to do about the Dies Committee and others who were on our necks, Mike Mansfield was one of those whom I would talk to on occasion, and he was always willing to take ten or fifteen minutes to advise about the next move.

#### Congressman George Mahon

DSM: George Mahon who is now Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, comes from the Panhandle country of Texas. I shall always remember that when George was a young Congressman back in the 1930's he came down to my office, and said he needed a dam in his district. It so happened that there had been a dam built, in the adjoining district which Marvin Jones represented, by the land usage agency of the old Resettlement Administration which was finally transferred to us. I told him that I was sorry but that I did not believe we were in a position to build any dams. The dam building period was pretty well past. I said "Tell me, Congressman, do you really think it would be a good expenditure of money to build a dam down there even if we had the money?" He said "That isn't the question. My answer is no, I don't think it is a good expenditure of money; but my constituents do and for that reason I'm asking for a dam." I said "I can understand that perfectly. All I can do is to write you a letter and tell you about the situation in regard to a limitation of funds and give you something that you can send back to your constituents."

This was the beginning of our acquaintance. I saw a great deal of him during the following few years. He was always decent, he was always ready to sit down and talk sense. Here again was a man whom I learned



to regard so highly that during the days when we were under stress I occasionally went up to see him for advice. I remember one time I went up and called him off the House floor to talk with him, about what to do about Congressmen Costello and Dies, who were harrassing us in the W.R.A. days. He told me to go ahead and take care of our business and not worry too much about it, but if it got too bad to come back and he and a few other people would go on the floor and see what they could do about it. George Mahon is a conservative, a very solid, down-to-earth realist and a great person.

#### Congressman "Chet" Holofield

DSM: "Chet" Holofield was a member of the House of Representatives at the time I was Director of the War Relocation Authority. He was a young Congressman from Los Angeles. I shall always remember how I met "Chet" Holofield.

We had a young chap on our staff in the first year or two of W.R.A. by the name of Gibson who was working in our Community Affairs Division who came from California. He knew we were having a great deal of difficulty particularly with the West Coast Congressmen, most of them from California. So he came into my office one day and said "I don't know whether you will want me to do anything about this or not but I know Chet Holofield and if you have no objection I would like to go up and see him and tell him something about W.R.A.'s problems and about what your problems are, to see if I can't arrange for him to pick up some of the chips and do something about it." I said "Go right ahead." I briefed him and he went to the Hill.

In three or four days I got a letter from Chet Holofield raising a lot of questions which I'm sure had been discussed at the time Gibson was on the Hill.



I replied to them in writing. A few days later he got in touch with me by phone and said he thought it would be a good thing if we had a meeting of the California delegation. He said "If you like I'll ask Clarence Lee who is chairman of the delegation to call a meeting." I said "I would be very happy to have that happen." So he arranged with Clarence Lee to call a meeting of the California delegation. I went up still not having met Chet Holofield and didn't know what he looked like. He was a little late getting to the meeting and Clarence Lee, the chairman, was getting itchy and had about decided to go ahead without Holofield but just at that moment he walked in. I was sitting near the aisle where I could intercept him and I simply raised up out of my seat and shook hands and said "I'm Dillon Myer" and he said "Fine" and then went right on up front.

Holofield explained to the California delegation that he had a number of questions which had been bothering him. He had gotten in touch with me and I had been so helpful about answering them that he thought the rest of the delegation ought to have the opportunity to hear some of the same answers, so he had arranged for this meeting. He introduced me and we had a real session as we did four or five times subsequently through the next few months. It was an opening wedge into the delegation and the opportunity to get acquainted with these Congressmen many of whom felt that they had to batter us day after day after day because they thought it was the politic thing to do.

As soon as that meeting was over Chet Holofield and a young man by the name of George Outland who was in Congress only a term or two closed in as we came out and guided me to Holofield's office. They sat down with me and told me about the "facts of life" as far as California politics were concerned. They said that they wanted to be helpful and that I could call on them at any time.

I shall always remember one suggestion that Holofield made. He said "I think you ought to send a mine-graph statement to the whole West Coast delegation every time something happens that the Hearst papers





and others blow up into something that isn't quite right. Keep them informed week after week, and month after month so that people like Dick Welch (Congressman from San Francisco) will have his feet tied to the floor if he has the facts so that he can't say he didn't know about them." We adopted this practice and it was most helpful. It enabled Congressmen to be in a position where they had to know that I had sent them information giving our side of the events which was very often at variance with what went into the newspapers, and very often at variance from what was being fed out of the Dies Committee's Mr. Stripling and others. I shall always give my heartfelt thanks to "Chet" Holofield and to George Outland for the fact that they were willing to be the buffers.

It so happened after the Tule Lake incident in the early days of 1944 the whole California delegation with few exceptions and some of the Washington and Oregon delegations, twenty-one out of thirty-three West Coast Congressmen, signed a petition to President Roosevelt to have me fired. I was very pleased to know that "Chet" Holofield and George Outland and John Coffee from the State of Washington and several others were not on the petition. Some of the others were away at the time but several of these people were courageous enough to give us the support that we needed. I occasionally still stop by and say hello to "Chet" Holofield, because I feel very strongly that a man of his type should know how much he is appreciated.

#### Congressman Charles Levy

DSM: There are two other people who are now out of the Congress that I want to talk about briefly. The first one is the late Charles Levy who at the time I first knew him was Congressman from the Spokane area of the State of Washington. This was back in the days when I was with the Soil Conservation Service.



One of the reasons that I got so well acquainted with Congressman Levy was the fact that he was on the sub-committee of the House Agriculture Appropriations Committee. We saw him regularly as we went before the committee with our budget. At one stage I presented a budget for small water development projects which had been transferred to us with the Land Use Division. Charles Levy spoke up and said he thought this was something that should be the responsibility of the Bureau of Reclamation. When the bill came on the floor he bucked our appropriation for this particular item on the grounds that it did belong in the Bureau of Reclamation. So I called up the Chief of the Bureau of Reclamation whom I knew at that time and told him about the problem. He said "We are not interested in doing this kind of work." I said, "Would you be willing to meet with Congressman Levy and me if I got in touch with the Congressman and arranged a meeting?" He said "I would be delighted." So we had the meeting. Charles Levy came down and met with us.

The Chief of the Bureau of Reclamation told him that there was a mistake about this. It wasn't something that they could do or were really interested in or were equipped to do but it was something which the S.C.S. was equipped to do. So Levy accepted the statement and went back to the Hill. At the first opportunity he got he got up on the floor of the House and said he wanted to correct a mistake. This was the first time I had ever known a Congressman to announce publicly that he had made a mistake! He corrected his mistake by saying that he was wrong about this and he now wanted to support the program for small water development of the type that we were presenting and gave his reasons for it. I called him up and said "Congressman, this is the first time that I have ever known a politician who was willing to admit to the world that he had made a mistake, and I just want to give you a great big pat on the back and say thanks."

As a result we got to be very close friends. After he became a judge in Western Washington, whenever I went that way I always stopped in to see him and had a good visit with him. He was a wonderful man.



Congressman Norris Poulson

DSM: The other Congressman whom I want to mention briefly is Norris Poulson. Norris was a young Congressman during the "battle" of the War Relocation Authority in the early 1940's, who was a member of the group who met with the California delegation that I mentioned previously. We thought Norris was willing to listen and Bob Cozzens who was in Washington at the time and I spent quite a little time with Poulson trying to convince him that he shouldn't go off the deep end. But he evidently thought his political interests were strong enough on the other side that he finally went on the floor of the House and made a scathing attack on me personally and on W.R.A. Naturally we didn't quit speaking to him but we didn't see as much of him as we had previously.

He then was out of Congress for two terms and was reelected. While I was in the Capitol building one day shortly after I became the Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs which was six or seven years after his attack, I ran into Norris Poulson. We stopped and shook hands and he said "Dillon, I have been intending to tell you something and here's a good opportunity. I just wanted to tell you that you were right and I was wrong back in the days of W.R.A." I said "Norris, I appreciate that and I always kind of thought that when you really understood what it was all about you probably would change your mind. I appreciate it very much."

Well, this wasn't the end of it. The first time our Bureau of Indian Affairs Appropriation Bill came on the floor a big husky "blow-hard" Congressman-at-large from Ohio, named Bender, got up and took out after me personally and made a scathing statement in some respects very similar to the one that Norris Poulson had made seven or eight years before. Lo and behold, Norris Poulson got to his feet the minute he had an opportunity and said "You are completely mistaken. I know Dillon Myer. I once made a statement about him myself that I now regret because I have come to the conclusion that Dillon Myer was right and I was





wrong in those days, and I still think very highly of him. I am sure that you will find that you are wrong about Dillon Myer."

I called Norris Poulson after I read the record and thanked him for what he had done and said again that this was the second incident that I had ever known where a politician had been willing to get up on the floor and say that he had been wrong. He said "Well, Dillon, it almost got me licked. I came off the floor and Bender had barged out of the door and he grabbed me by the lapels and I thought he was going to kill me. I stood my ground and he let loose pretty soon but he was so mad because we were both Republicans and he couldn't understand why I had let him down."

One other little incident. Some time after we had finished the W.R.A. program and after I had resigned from the job as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Jenness, my youngest daughter Margaret and myself made a trip to the West Coast. We got into Los Angeles and the newspapers had big headlines about the big fight the mayor was having about trash collection. Here was Norris Poulson's name right across the top of the paper because at that time he was Mayor of Los Angeles. I said to my family "I must call Norris up." The next morning I called him, and I was greeted as an old friend. He wanted to know what we were doing and I said "Well, Margaret wants to see Hollywood so we were planning to go over to Hollywood and spend a day or two in Los Angeles seeing the sights." He said "Do you have a car?" I said "No." He said "There will be one down there in thirty minutes." Presently we were paged and when we went out the front door here was a wonderful driver who had spent a lot of time on one of the Hollywood lots. His father was employed over there in one of the big studios and he was then serving as chauffeur for the Mayor. We had the use of a big black Cadillac with a telephone and all the equipment in it, and we were shown around Hollywood in style that day, as a result of my knowing the Mayor and my past experience with him. This was a heart warming experience. When we got into the car and were well established Jenness reached over and touched me on the arm and said "Just let me touch you."





Relations With Congress

DSM: There are other people whom I learned to know in my Congressional contacts that I might mention but these stand out in my memory at the moment. For fear that I might go on and on I think I had better close it out simply with this statement. The one thing that I missed more than anything else after I got out of the Government and did not have any official contacts with the committees and members of the Congress, was the fact that I didn't have the opportunity to sit down across the table and have the kind of give and take that we had in the days when I was a "bureaucrat." I learned to enjoy the committee sessions thoroughly. I also enjoyed seeing my friends on an official basis.

I learned after a short time that once you are out of the Government and you have no business up there you are not really welcome in most of the offices other than just to shake hands and say hello because these people are busy people. I still miss it but I had a good experience during the seventeen or eighteen years of Congressional contacts.

HP: One of the things that has impressed me of the descriptions of the people on the Hill whom you knew is that you were never afraid of them. So often in Government there is disproportionate fear of the men on the Hill. But you seemed to have accepted them as your equals and were relaxed and impressed with them and I think this must have contributed a great deal to your ability to get along with them.

DSM: I must admit that during the first few rounds I had on the Hill I was nervous and a bit afraid, and occasionally defensive, much to my disadvantage. You never want to "bark" back at the old-time Senator across the table. You had better take it in stride and get at it some other way and I learned this after the first one or two hearings. I learned very soon that as long as I knew more about the subject than the people across the table did, I could have fun out of it because I was confident that I had the answers. I occasionally



took it on the chin for a while but I learned to wait for the opportunity to make the record clear. So it did get to be fun.

It is true, generally speaking, that if you play fair with the people across the table the Congressmen and the Senators, they will usually play fair with you. This is something that you have to learn the hard way. Even in the days of the Eightieth Congress when we were taking a terrible beating when I was Commissioner of the Public Housing Administration because they were trying to kill public housing, we had on the whole very courteous treatment before the committees and a chance to build out part of the record.

Speaking of this type of thing I have another incident that maybe I should throw in here.

Senator Pat McCarran was a politico of the first order from Nevada as everybody who ever knew him knew. He was hard boiled, he was tough but during the early days of the War Relocation Authority they wanted some people out of the relocation centers to help with the raising and marketing of tomato plants which they grew in the Moapa Valley in Nevada. They didn't have the needed labor in those days. The war was on and we had pressure from every side up to and including finally the Governor who had not as yet given us a letter which we required saying that they would be responsible for law and order and see to it that the evacuees were properly treated and protected. Among others, we had a call from Senator McCarran's office.

It happened that Rex Lee who at that time was in charge of our Salt Lake Office, had gone over to Nevada to meet with the Governor. I could not reach him that afternoon but I left a call for him to call back that night. When he called I asked him whether the Governor had promised to send a letter and he said "Yes." I said "Do you think he will?" and he said "Yes." I said "Let the folks go to Nevada to help them get their work done." They were over there by noon of the following day. As a result of that we had a call from the Senator's assistant saying that the Senator had had the most expeditious service that he



had ever gotten out of anybody in the Government and they appreciated it very much. A few days later McCarran called personally to be sure that I had gotten the message.

It wasn't very long after this incident, a few weeks or months, we had our appropriations bill up before the Senate committee. Normally if the House passes the bill without any change you don't go to the Senate unless you are called because there is nothing to be changed and this is what happened in this case. The House had passed the bill without a change in any respect. So I was surprised when I got a call from the Hill saying that they wanted me to come up and testify before the Senate. I went up and as we waited in the anteroom Senator Hayden came through and I stopped him and said "Senator, tell me why we are up here, do you know?" He said "No, but I will find out." So he went into the room and came back out and said "I don't know why but Senator McCarran wants to talk with you. He is up on the floor now fighting another battle, so I understand that the hearing you are going to have will be postponed until tomorrow."

The next day Senator McCarran came in and there was about ten or eleven other Senators who were members of that committee present. The Senator came in loaded with editorials and pieces that came out of the Nevada papers all of which were violently against the Japanese people. It was the same kind of campaign that had been going on in the Salt River Valley in Arizona. I realized that this had overlapped into that part of Nevada which wasn't very far away. The Senator would read one of these tough editorials or one of these tough pieces written with a byline by somebody out there and he would end up by saying "Mr. Myer, I agree with that. Now what do you think?" and he gave me all the time I wanted to rebutt. I had right in my file a telegram from Senator McCarran asking that we send these Japanese Americans in, about whom the newspapers were protesting. Well, this went on for about an hour and a half. McCarran was building the record and I was also, because he was giving me plenty of opportunity to build my record.





When he finished he stood up and said "Off the record." He turned to the rest of the committee with a smile and said "Gentlemen, this has gotten to be a very tough problem out in my part of the world, in my State, and I even had a letter the other day from a man who told me if I didn't do something about it he would vote Republican the next time." Of course everybody laughed. I said "Senator, before you leave and while we are off the record could I ask you a couple of questions?" He said "Why of course, Mr. Myer." I said "We sent some folks into Nevada to help some of your farmers down in the Moapa Valley with their work and they are still there. Would you like us to take them out?" He said "Not by any means, Mr. Myer. We very much appreciate what you did for us. You did a wonderful job. They are still there and the people are very happy with them and please don't do anything about it. Just leave them there."

All of this was off the record. I fished his telegram out of my case during the time that all of this was going on. Leland Barrows punched me and rolled his head sidewise back and forth. He was afraid that I was going to present it and of course I wasn't. I just wanted him to know I had it. Well this was all there was to it. He was just building up the record and here was the proof of it. A few days later when the Congressional Record of this hearing came to my office which it always did from the appropriations hearings, for us to make any corrections in the record, I called Senator McCarran's office and talked to Miss Adams, his trusted assistant, and said "What is the relationship between the present Governor and the Senator politically?" She said "Mr. Myer, we wish we knew." I said "I'll tell you why I asked. I mentioned the Governor's name on two or three occasions in my testimony. I didn't have to and it isn't pertinent or necessary to the testimony and I just wondered whether I should strike it out which I can very easily do." She said "Mr. Myer, do you have a letter or a wire from the Governor asking that you send evacuees in to help do this work?" I said "Yes." She said "Will you send us a copy of it?" I said "Yes." She said "If you will do that you can do anything you want with that record." So this was the reason. He was afraid that the Governor was going to run against him



for the Senate one of these days. The Governor had built a pretty bad record on this situation and he wanted to be sure that he couldn't outdo him when it came to being against the "Japs", so called.

One other incident that I think may be worth recording has to do with the Senator, who until recently was Minority Leader of the Senate, Everett Dirksen. I learned to know Everett Dirksen during the days when I was appearing before the House Appropriations Sub-Committee on Agriculture of which he was a member. We got quite well acquainted because he was of course a minority member and was supposed to be picking at everything we did. In spite of this we got to be very good friends. During the latter part of my period with the Soil Conservation Service after the so-called land use program was transferred over to us, we had some problems with some of the things that had been completed before they came to us. One of them was a dam that was built down in southern Illinois which cost a lot of money and of which Congressman Kent Keller was very proud. It was probably a good thing in their community but it probably wasn't justified on the basis of the authorization. They happened to have an engineer in those days who liked to build dams and he didn't worry too much about the justification.

In any case, we got a letter one day from Senator Dirksen, who at that time was Congressman Dirksen, asking for a detailed statement about this particular dam in Kent Keller's district. He wanted to know about the costs and the justification for it. We wrote him about a three or four page letter. As I usually did under these circumstances instead of mailing the letter I took it up. I handed it to him and said "I think maybe you ought to read that while I'm here because if there are any further questions I can then answer them." After he read it, I said "I have a message for you. We told Kent Keller that we had this letter from you and Kent Keller's reply was 'You tell Everett Dirksen to get out of my district and if he doesn't I'll kick his ass out.'." So I told Everett Dirksen this and he leaned back and just roared. He said "Well, I think Kent Keller is justified. I don't usually meddle in other peoples affairs who are Congressmen from other districts. The only reason I sent



you this letter is because it was sent down to me by Joe Martin, the Majority Leader of the House, and he asked me to handle it and that's the reason I'm handling it." We had a good laugh about it and I'm sure he sent the information on to whoever requested it and that was that.

I saw Everett Dirksen many times during the years when I was in Agriculture and occasionally when I became Director of the War Relocation Authority.

#### Attitude Toward Congress

HP: As I have mentioned before, I can't help wondering about the one common demoninator that is your lack of fear. You seemed to have the attitude when you went up on the Hill that you were certainly as good as anybody whom you were talking to. This lack of fear seems to be an important ingredient to your successful relationships there.

DSM: I'm not sure that I can explain to you just how all of this came about but I will do my best. I think I should start by saying bascially I was quite a shy boy who grew up in the country. I didn't have too many public contacts in my very early days but I did have a good many as a teenager when we began to deliver commodities to cottage people and others. This experience may have had something to do with my having learned how to deal with people. I worked in a grocery store owned by my aunt and uncle off and on throughout the years when I was in grade school and I think that helped.

Basically though, I think that my family relationship was a factor. My Mother was also a very shy person but she was a very proud one. Without having anything much said about it, there was never any question in our family but that we held our heads up. We were not any better than anybody else but we were not any



worse than anybody else. My Father was highly respected in the community for his honesty, his frankness, his ability to communicate with people and his helpfulness to them. My Mother was highly respected too, although she didn't have the same kind of active part in community life as my Father did. The home relationship and example were good ones.

When I was in college I was a member of an Agricultural fraternity which was most helpful to me. I had help on every turn if I needed it with studies that I wasn't too good at. I was encouraged and I was expected to do my best. So this was also a good atmosphere.

When I got out on the job myself I began to look around me and I began to wonder why some of the people who were much older than I hadn't gone further than they had. I wondered if they hadn't worked hard enough, whether they didn't know enough about their subject, whether they didn't know how to present it well, or what the problem was. I found myself trying to do something about that, and it wasn't very long until I realized that I was willing to present anything that I knew which was in my field to anybody and to present it fairly well.

There was one incident that probably was a good one. I went out on an extension trip with a group of older extension men to attend two or three meetings. At one place we had a local experimental field which was run by our department. Somebody asked me a question about it and before I got through I admitted I didn't know too much about it. We hadn't more than left that building until I was jumped on from all sides by my associates and was told that you never admitted that you didn't know about something. You gave the best you knew and say that there was probably additional information but you didn't deny your knowledge because as they pointed out, immediately after my admission of ignorance there weren't many more questions.

I found before I had been out of college very long that I was willing to tackle any job that was assigned to me within my field of knowledge or within





my area of responsibility with confidence. I suppose this was pretty basic to my later approach to Congress. I don't know exactly when I came to the conclusion that there wasn't any percentage in kowtowing. I never did kowtow. I don't think my Mother or Father ever kowtowed to anybody. We told the truth as we knew it and we did our work the best we knew how, and we never felt any particular shame about the way we handled a matter.

I remember quite distinctly after I moved from my first job at the University of Kentucky, and after I had been county agent at Evansville, Indiana, for a time, when I was offered a job at Purdue by G. I. Christy who was the Extension Director, I learned that there were certain people on this staff whom he loved to "ride." They never came into his office or they never came around him that he didn't do something that I thought was bad to them. I used to say that evidently he could see a man's knees shaking under his pants the minute he came into the office. He always climbed right on and went to work on him. In my case he never did because I think he knew that I wasn't going to take it.

HP: Apparently there is something of a bully in many people.

DSM: That's right. He was a bit of a bully. But he never bullied me. I realized that this was important to me. I suppose that was simply another event in my realization that the thing for me to do was to remain firm and not allow myself to be bullied.

After I became a member of the staff of the Soil Conservation Service and I began to handle part or all of the hearings before the Appropriation committees of the House and the Senate, and before any other committees of the Congress, for the first few times I must admit that I was nervous and a bit defensive. At one hearing Senator Bankhead had dug into me pretty deep and I had barked back at him. After the hearing was over Hugh Bennett who was my chief at that time very decently and very kindly reminded me that I should not loose my temper. I should handle it in a somewhat more tactful manner. This was good experience.

I never went to the Hill that I wasn't thoroughly prepared so that I felt fully confident that I knew



more about it than anybody else, even the people in my own shop, because the budget hearings were my particular bailiwick. As a consequence I had no fear. As I saw these Congressmen, many of whom had been former prosecuting attorneys, sitting across the table from me trying to dig into the testimony to find some holes, it got to be a big challenge to be able to meet their questions head on and to build a good record. It wasn't very long until we began to establish a mutual respect.

### Politics

HP: Did you ever consider going into politics?

DSM: I have been asked many times whether I had considered going into politics. My answer has always been no I never have. First of all by the time I learned something about politics I was living in the Washington area, I was a well established "bureaucrat." As a matter of fact I was living in Virginia a good deal of the time where politics didn't appeal to me. I encouraged Jenness to go into politics once as a member of the Falls Church council, and I had a lot of fun serving as her advisor, but I never was in it myself.

I enjoyed myself in my bureaucratic relationship with people in politics. I respected those people I knew who were the good ones. I knew when to show disrespect at the proper stage to those who weren't the good ones.

Jenness was asked at one time after she had been on the town council to run for Congress in our district in Virginia. We discussed it at some length. Finally we sat down one evening and I said "Do you know how much it would take to do this job without accepting somebody else's money?" She said "No." I said "Well I have been making some inquiry about it. It would



take about fifty thousand dollars." She said "Let's forget it." So we forgot it.

It is true that many people who are in politics have started where it didn't cost that much money. They built up their knowledge of the game and they built up a clientele. Former President Truman, for example, was a county judge, what we would have called in Ohio a county commissioner, as one of his first jobs in the political field. Of course he had support from some very strong people in Missouri. How much he had to kowtow to those people I don't know. I must say though that I think he made a darn good President and he knew when to draw the line. He knew when to say yes, and he knew when to say no which others have not always been able to do.





## CHAPTER XV

SOME PEOPLE AND EXPERIENCES THAT WERE IMPORTANT IN  
MY LIFE

DSM: My parents were two of the finest people I have ever known. They were both people who practiced the Christian faith and were quite active in church work but the important thing is that they were people who really lived their beliefs and taught them. I think I am beholden to my Dad, as well as to my Mother, for the training I received in learning the necessity of always being honest and of remembering that there was a Golden Rule and when you were tempted to overstep to remember to repeat the Golden Rule to yourself and try to do something about it. I have said many times that if I could leave this world with a feeling that I had the respect of the community in which I had lived and operated equal to the respect that my Father enjoyed in the community in which he lived and worked, I would feel very happy.

I shall always be grateful for the kind of parents I had. They were farm people. Their life was much more restricted from the standpoint of communication with the rest of the world than mine has been, but nevertheless they lived a wonderful life and they passed on to me and to their other children something that is impossible to get otherwise than by having the right kind of parents.

HP: I wish you would backtrack, and give some description of the personal appearance of all of these people: Your Mother, your Father, Mr. Orr, all of them that you have mentioned.

DSM: My Father was not as tall as I am. As I remember him he was five feet nine inches, I'm six feet one inch so I'm four inches taller than he was. My Mother was five feet seven inches which was a fair height for a lady in those days but still she was not considered a large woman. My Dad when I first remembered him had almost



black hair and a very dark mustache and one of the things that I shall always remember he had a very bad case of diptheria and was ill for some time during which he allowed his beard to grow, and he had a very dark beard. When he shaved it off his face was so white that we marveled at it. My Dad was not a man of great physical strength. On the other hand when he decided to do a day's work he really could do a day's work. He was wiry, he was active at all times except when he was ill, and he kept going at a great pace right up to the time he left this world at age eighty years. I remember quite distinctly that we used to talk about Dad cracking his coattails as he went down across the field to catch the inter-urban. He always went in a hurry and he went almost as fast as I did when I was running to catch the car to go to high school.

My Mother had long beautiful auburn hair. She had to cut out part of it occasionally because it was so heavy it made her head ache if she kept it all. She could sit on her hair and I loved to see her comb it. She had the kind of complexion that goes with that color hair and she freckled easily. She was very careful to wear a sunbonnet when she went out into the sun to do garden work and she did a great deal of work in the garden. She liked to be outside.

HP: Flowers and vegetables both?

DSM: There were both flowers and vegetables, and also fruits in the garden. She had raspberries and blackberries which she helped to pick.

We always went blackberrying out into the wilds where we nearly always got chiggers but she loved to come in with two or three buckets of blackberries and she would "put them up."

She was a great person, a person of tremendous energy and vitality although she wasn't the kind of person who moved around fast. She looked after the chickens, and the garden for the most part. I helped her as I got older. She did a lot of other things, and of course in those days, there was much canning of fruits in particular and a little later vegetables.



and the frying down of sausage in lard. She looked after all of these things and more while she raised a family of four kids.

HP: How much difference was there between you and your sisters?

DSM: My brother is three years older than I am. My sister next younger than I is about four and a half years younger and my youngest sister was born ten years later so that I was in my teens when she was born.

### University Life

DSM: As I moved along into college I was most fortunate in being invited to become a member of the Alpha Zeta fraternity which had very high scholarship standards and a group of serious students, who saw to it that I and other freshmen were told about it in case they found we were lagging in our studies. Furthermore if we needed tutoring in any subjects we received it from the Juniors and Seniors. I particularly remember having been tutored in Chemistry by Tom Phillips which I needed very badly. This got me through Chemistry. The relationship with not only the undergraduates but the opportunity I had to become acquainted with many leaders in the agriculture field not only at my own university but people who came in from other institutions for meetings at various times was highly important in providing information and inspiration.

### Dr. Arthur McCall

DSM: Dr. Arthur McCall who recommended me for my first job was rather a rotund person. He was a large man



and thickly built. He had dark hair and wore a mustache. He walked calmly and slowly but he had a spring in his walk. He had a beautiful smile and was a most pleasant person to be with and to deal with. I had the privilege of not only knowing him during my college years when I was a student of his but I met him socially on a number of occasions because we were members of the same fraternity and when we had various activities in the fraternity he usually came. Throughout the years I kept in touch with him, especially after I came to Washington. He had already joined the staff of the Bureau of Soils and Chemistry and it was always a pleasure to see him and sit down and talk with him from time to time. I would remind him of the fact that he had started me off in spite of low grades and he always said that he was glad that he had done so.

Many years later, in 1947, Dr. McCall and Dr. Warburton on the National Director of Agricultural Extension jointly sponsored me for membership in the Cosmos Club in Washington.

#### George Roberts and Edwin Kinney

DSM: After I left college and went to Kentucky I had two bosses, both of whom were wonderful people. George Roberts was head of the department. He was a chemist and took care of the soils work in the department generally and his assistant was Edwin Kinney who handled the supervision of the teaching of field crops as well as supervision of all of the variety tests and other crops experimental work in the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station. Edwin Kinney has passed away only recently at age eighty-seven. He had been living with a daughter in Washington and I visited him on a number of occasions during the last three or four years. He graduated at Ohio State University some years before I did, in 1908, as I remember it. I graduated in 1914.





Kinney was a little more than medium height, probably five feet ten inches or five feet eleven inches, a bit rotund, not fat but with a bit of flesh, a man of quiet demeanor who was always busy. In addition to his teaching activities he wrote replies to questions that came in to him from two or three farm papers in the south. I can remember seeing him walk the floor and dictate his replies to those questions which had been presented for reply. He was a wonderful boss. George Roberts was also my boss but Ed Kinney worked more closely with me than George Roberts did.

Roberts believed that everybody should have some responsibility and as a consequence I was given a full teaching load as soon as I was able to carry it, after I had finished my college work in the first semester at the University of Kentucky. I taught courses in field crops, both to the four-year students and to the two-year students and assisted in the supervision of the soil laboratory. They suggested that I also give a course in farm weeds, which I did. It had never been given as far as I know, at that institution, and I had a lot of fun doing it because I learned a great deal about weeds and plants. I had to start from scratch. We did quite a bit of it during the fall and spring when growth was such that they could be identified.

HP: Did you use a textbook for that?

DSM: We did not have a textbook for farm weeds. I wrote to the various experiment stations throughout the country and got bulletins which described weeds and weed control. I developed a very good library. I wish I still had these materials by the way but they have gotten lost along the way. The Ohio Experiment Station had an excellent bulletin. I used these for my lectures and also made them available in the building where the students could come and use them. In some cases I got extra copies so that they were available and could be taken out.

HP: What is a weed? What is the definition of a weed?



DSM: The best definition of a weed that I have ever heard was by L. H. Bailey the great plant man from Cornell University. He said "The weed is a plant out of place."

HP: Then if a stalk of corn were in a field of wheat, it would be a weed.

DSM: Would be a weed, that's right. Normally you think of certain plants which are regular pests in the farm, jimson weed, the different kinds of pig weed, and lambsquarter. In the small grain crops there is cockle and corn flower and wild mustard. There are certain plants, vetch for example, which is a very good crop if properly controlled but if vetch seed gets into and comes up in a wheat field it wraps up the wheat so you can practically take one corner of the area where the vetch grows and shake the whole area because it winds up the crop. Vetch was known as the tares of the Bible. But it is a good crop. It is a good legumenous crop if kept separated from the small grain crops.

HP: You must not have been much older than some of your students when you were teaching these courses.

DSM: I wasn't. I started doing some teaching while I was a Senior because I didn't graduate until June after I went down to Kentucky the first of February. I was taking courses right along with some of the Seniors and I was supervising laboratory work of some of these very same people.

HP: This is most unusual isn't it?

DSM: No, it is not too unusual or wasn't in those days because they had student assistants in various laboratories, who were majoring in the work. We had student assistants who helped supervise the chemistry labs and both in general chemistry and agriculture chemistry. Sometimes we had assistants who were not yet graduated who were Seniors so it wasn't entirely unusual although it wasn't common. Usually it was graduate students who were the assistants.



HP: What did you teach the students? How to identify and how to eradicate?

DSM: That's right. In the course on weeds we taught them how to identify weeds, and control weeds. We usually did this on field trips during the part of the season when we could identify them in their native habitat although we did have bulletins and certain text materials that we could use for identification purposes. We also gathered specimens which could be brought into the laboratory and dried.

On our field trips we would go out on the farm and around the fence rows and through the edge of the campus. You could find weeds almost any place; especially in the good Blue Grass soil of central Kentucky they spring up easily.

### G. I. Christie

DSM: The top man in the Purdue Agricultural Extension Service was G. I. Christie. He was an Canadian who had graduated at Guelph Ontario Agricultural College and had done his first work in the States in Iowa before he came to Purdue. He also was a specialist in the field of Agronomy and he loved to make speeches. He was tall, I would suppose six feet, somewhat heavily built with an excellent voice and he didn't hesitate to put it out. You never had to worry about hearing G. I. Christie because he was articulate and careful and he never was at a loss for words. He made many, many speeches and he appreciated people who could make speeches. I think I have already stated in a previously that he heard me make a couple of speeches in the first few weeks that I was on the job in Evansville which evidently led to two different offers later, the first one which I turned down and the second one which I accepted to become more closely associated with him at Purdue University.





G. I. at that time was widely known among the extension group and was probably one of the outstanding extension people of his day. He came to Purdue in 1905. By the time I got there he had already been on the job eleven years and was well established.

Christie was the kind of person who if you would knuckle to him he'd make your knees shake everytime he saw you. It happened that I never knuckled and for some reason or other he respected me. As a consequence we got along beautifully. He gave me the opportunity to do a number of things which I am sure he would not have done had I been willing to be his vassal.

### Harry Ramsower

DSM: After leaving Purdue I moved to Ohio as County Agricultural Agent in Franklin County, Ohio, because I was approached by Director Harry Ramsower of the extension service and asked to take the job. Harry Ramsower was also one of my fraternity brothers and much older than I was. I think he had graduated in 1906 and was well established as a Professor of Agricultural Engineering when I was in college. He was an excellent teacher, a man of better than medium height. He was quite nearsighted and wore glasses, had a good voice. He was another person who believed that you should have your lectures and speeches well prepared and to say them in such a way that there was no question about what was said. He was able to make himself heard at the far corners of the room and was highly respected as a teacher. He was later appointed as Director of Extension and this is where he was when I was invited to come back to Ohio.

HP: What brought you back to Ohio? Was it that you felt that you wanted to go back to your home state? Was it more of a possibility of an advancement in your job? What factors went into that decision?



DSM: I came back to Ohio mainly because I had bought a farm about twenty-five miles east of Columbus, Ohio, in 1917, just before World War I had broken out and at that stage I still thought I was going to farm it myself sometime. This opportunity to come back to Columbus, Ohio, which was only twenty-five miles away, was an opportunity to keep in close touch with my farm and its operations. I decided to take the offer I think mainly because it was near the farm and of course it was also near my home. My Mother and Father were still living and it provided an opportunity to see them more regularly.

I also wanted additional county agent experience. I didn't dream at that time that I would accept Director Ramsower's offer two and a half years later to become the District Supervisor in Northwestern Ohio, but I did. This came at a time when I was still thinking that I was going to farm.

#### Howard Tolley

DSM: Howard Tolley was head of the AAA Planning Division. I worked with him as an immediate member of his staff and he gave me many, many challenging jobs to do including among other things the review of the proposed States Soil Conservation Districts Act which I had the opportunity to help get adopted in the states after I moved over to the Soil Conservation Service.

He was a man of real intelligence and ability and a great person to work for and to work with. He spoke with a low voice. One of those people who never seemed to be ruffled and went about his business with no pretense what so ever. As I look back I think of him as one of the great sponsors that I had during that particular period. I continued to see him often after I left the Department of Agriculture up to the time of his death.



Milton Eisenhower

DSM: I owe a great deal to Milton Eisenhower who at the time I came to Washington was the head of the Information Service for the Department of Agriculture. Milton, along with Paul Appleby, decided evidently after a time that I had certain abilities that should be utilized.

About the time I moved over to the Soil Conservation Service he was assigned by the Secretary to help integrate the Soil Conservation Service into the Department, and spent part of his time for the first two or three months working at this job. He had an office in the Information Service and another office in the building where the Soil Conservation Service was located.

HP: It was an unusual assignment for an information officer.

DSM: Yes it was. In the meantime the Secretary had made him the land use coordinator in the Department and he continued to handle the information office for some time after that. He finally gave it up and Morse Salisbury took over the job as Director of Information.

HP: Had Milton had newspaper experience?

DSM: Yes. He had had some newspaper experience. He also had had some experience as an attache in the State Department Counselor Service in Scotland. He was brought to Washington back during the Republican regime when William Jardine was Secretary of Agriculture. He was an Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture in 1924 and he continued in Washington until he took the job as President of his Alma Mater, Kansas State College in 1944.

In any case Milton and Paul Appleby recommended that I become the head of a Division of States Relations and Planning in the Soil Conservation Service. He fought the battle with the Civil Service Commission to get a job classification set up which I could afford to take. I am sure every division head in the Depart-



ment of Agriculture thanked him and me because they were all raised nine hundred dollars a year when the new grade level was finally approved in September of 1935. I moved over to the Soil Conservation Service in Agriculture. In the meantime, Milton Eisenhower was Land Use Coordinator and we worked very closely together.

I served on his committee while I was still with the Agriculture Adjustment Administration to write up a program for the integration of the Soil Conservation Service into the department. I also served with him on many other committees to which I was assigned throughout the years.

Then, he had been appointed against his will as Director of the War Relocation Authority in March 1942 where he served only three months when he received an appointment as Deputy to Elmer Davis in the Office of War Information. It was then that he recommended me to Harold Smith, who was the Budget Director, for his replacement as Director of W.R.A. which resulted in an appointment by the President to succeed him in June of 1942.

During those years Milton Eisenhower was quite a supporter of mine. He promoted my interests at almost every turn. At the end of my work in W.R.A. he wrote me a wonderful letter saying this was a job that he couldn't have done, and was very complimentary about the work that I had done. So I feel very kindly toward Milton Eisenhower.

In brief Milton was a man whose middle name was public relations. He frankly did not like to be between what I have often called the rock and the hard place. He didn't like to make tough decisions which might effect his relations with other people. There was always a struggle within him when he had to face such a problem. That is one of the reasons that he was unhappy in the W.R.A. program.

He was an excellent public relations man, an excellent writer, and a highly intelligent and articulate person with a great deal of charm who has been most successful not only in the work that he did in





Agriculture but in his three different positions as college president since he left the Department. His first one was already mentioned as President of Kansas State College, then he moved to Penn State College and during that period there he got the name of Penn State College changed to Penn State University and later he moved to Johns Hopkins University where he retired in June of 1968.

Paul Appleby

DSM:       The late Paul Appleby who when I first knew him was Assistant to Henry Wallace, one of five or six assistants, was the key man and Wallace's right hand man. He graduated at Grinnell College and spent a number of years in Iowa and was quite well acquainted with the Secretary before they came to Washington.

Paul was highly intelligent, a person with definite ideas. At times he was irascible but if he was for you he would support you to the limit. He was little better than medium height, on the slender side, with graying hair, with very sharp eyes and was a highly articulate person.

My first personal experience with Paul Appleby was not a very happy one. I was still working in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration as head of the section on compliance plans and I had proposed that the compliance office in Iowa be moved from Des Moines to Ames where they would be more closely associated with the college of agriculture extension service. I came in one morning and Victor Christgau, who was my immediate boss, said that Paul Appleby wanted to see me. I asked him if he had any idea as to why and he smiled and said "No." I went over to Paul Appleby's office and in those days I wore a hat every place I went outside the building. I laid my hat on his desk and sat down and he said "I would like to have you state your reasons for proposing to move the compliance



office from Des Moines to Ames." So I proceeded to state all of the reasons. When I finished my statement he looked at me with a cold stare and said "When you came in here I had an open mind about this matter but now I haven't because I don't think you stated one good reason why the office should be moved." I looked at him for a moment, got up, picked up my hat and said "Well I guess that's that" and walked out.

The very next day he called me by phone, called me by first name, was most affable and from that time on we were good friends, in spite of the fact that I'm sure he was irked and I was more irked than he was after our first conference.

Paul continued as assistant to Henry Wallace throughout the period when I was carrying the battle to get the States Soil Conservation Districts Act passed by the various states, and he was quite favorable to our program. He believed strongly in the water shed idea because he thought the counties were outdated as governmental units of any importance. He also thought that certain of the states should be combined such as the Dakotas and other states with very limited populations. Every time we got into a battle Paul was always there and ready to support us.

I forgot to mention the fact that in 1937 he and Milton Eisenhower -- I think it was Paul's idea -- recommended to Hugh Bennett that I become the Assistant Chief of the service rather than Chief of a division. This happened almost immediately. It took me a long time to find out that this recommendation came out of the Secretary's office. Paul and I got to be very close friends and by the time he became Under Secretary after Henry Wallace left and Claude Wickard became Secretary of Agriculture we saw a great deal of each other.

Later he went to Syracuse University as Dean of the College of Administration and was there for a good many years. He became quite well known in the field of public administration. He wrote a couple of books, and finally retired in Washington.



M. L. Wilson

DSM: Another gentleman who was one of the great men of the early New Deal days was M.L. Wilson. M.L. when I first knew him was head of the Wheat Division of the Agriculture Adjustment Administration and I started dealing with him during the year when I was in charge of the Agricultural Adjustment Program in Ohio. The wheat program was one that we dealt with regularly. He later became Assistant Secretary of Agriculture and then finally Under Secretary before he took over the job of National Extension Director which was his last job in the department and in the Government.

"M.L." was an earthy kind of person who had strong beliefs about how he should live and stuck to them. There was a story going around that somebody was in his office one day and he received a call from Mrs. Roosevelt inviting him to the White House for some kind of a function and every once in awhile he would say "Well, Mrs. Roosevelt I think you will have to give us a rain check this time." He didn't accept the invitation. M.L. had definite opinions about social functions most of which he didn't feel were very important.

He was a delightful person to go on trips with or to hobnob with in his office if he wasn't too busy, because he always had some tales to tell about experiences that he had had.

On two or three different occasions I heard M.L. give a full description of Custer's battle of the Little Big Horn to people who were not as well informed as he was. He had lived in Montana for a number of years. He loved history as well as geology, and philosophy and a lot of other sciences.

M.L. made many contributions to the program which a lot of people knew nothing about. For example, he was greatly interested in the Mormon practice of maintaining a store house throughout the years, which they used to help supply food to unfortunate people, in this manner taking care of their own poverty problems. Out of his interest in the Mormon store house came the idea





of the Ever-Normal granary which Henry Wallace got credit for and which, of course, he promoted. But it was M.L.'s idea.

M.L. Wilson also had a great deal to do with the program of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. As a member of the staff of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics at one stage he had been a party to the development of a program which involved domestic sales at one price and foreign sales at a lesser price in order to get rid of surpluses. This was known as the Domestic Allotment Act.

M.L. also conceived the States Soil Conservation Districts Act. He learned that down in Texas in certain areas they had what was known as wind erosion control districts. He had lived in Montana where they had some range problems and they had some grazing districts so he put two and two together and decided that there should be a general pattern of districts for erosion control and land use. So M.L. and Philip Glick prepared the first draft of the States Soil Conservation Districts Act.

There was a group of people who were known as "M.L.'s boys." I prided myself on the fact that I became one of M.L.'s boys before I left the Department, because he didn't take everybody under his wing. I shall always be glad that I had the opportunity to work closely with M.L. Wilson throughout the years that I was in the Department.

### Henry Wallace

DSM: Henry Wallace was Secretary of Agriculture during most of the several years that I spent in the Department of Agriculture. I worked with Henry Wallace very closely from 1934 until he became Vice President in 1941. Even after he became Vice President I occasionally went to the Hill to have talks with him because he



was always willing to see me and he always told me not to worry about using his time "because the Vice President didn't have anything much to do anyhow." He would always put his feet up and listen, and served as my advisor during the bad days of the War Relocation Authority when I needed somebody to talk to, about whom to see, how to go about it, and other problems. I also had some contact with him when he was Secretary of Commerce later.

Those of us who had worked for Henry Wallace, had two or three luncheon dates with him after he left the Government when he came to Washington. These were interesting and highly worth while. Henry was a rather shy, retiring type of person in his social contacts. He had rather bushy auburn hair as his Father had. He had been editor of the agricultural journal "Wallace's Farmer" for a number of years before he came to Washington. He had definite opinions regarding the fact that farmers should have the same opportunity for what he called parity of income along with industry and he went all out to try to work out a program that would provide for parity. My relations with him while he was Secretary of Agriculture were largely in conferences with other people, either small groups or large groups on policy matters, reporting in on problems of various types. Occasionally I was called in to provide information that he wanted to be brought up to date on.

Henry Wallace was a great man in spite of the fact that he occasionally got carried away with philosophies which were a bit off beat. At the time he became a Presidential candidate of the Progressive party he lost a lot of friends and a lot of support. I have never understood quite why he did that but in spite of it I still think that he was a great man and I think he made a great contribution.



Hugh Bennett

DSM: I spent more time with Hugh Bennett than anybody I had worked with in the Department of Agriculture. Hugh Bennett was chief of the Soil Conservation Service when I joined his staff in 1935. He had come to the Department of Agriculture in 1903 as a young college graduate. He joined the Bureau of Soils and Chemistry at that time as a chemist. Throughout the years he was involved in soil survey work, and had become a persistent erosion control advocate long before the New Deal came along.

Hugh was responsible for initiating a program of Erosion Control Experiment Stations which were established in different parts of the country long before the New Deal. The purpose was to secure scientific data on the amount of water and soil loss under various conditions. Most of these stations were carried on in cooperation with the states. However he was not a very great admirer of state agricultural institutions generally, because he felt that they were paying too little attention to soil erosion. There were only two or three state people whom I know of who were in his good graces. One of them was Dean Funchess of Alabama who supported the soil erosion control program. Another one was a Doctor Miller of Missouri. The Extension Service as far as he was concerned had been quite remiss in many respects and he never quite forgave them.

I was brought into the service in order to head up a division of States Relations and Planning, and I had my problems in the early days because of his antipathy to the Extension Service. I was in rather a tough position at times because Milton Eisenhower who at the same time had become Land Use Coordinator of the department and Paul Appleby who was the Secretary's right hand man usually called me in and talked to me about problems that I felt they should have taken up with Hugh Bennett. Usually they were related to administrative problems which Hugh wasn't much interested in. I followed the policy of going directly back to the office and reporting to him just what went on in every case. Gradually we developed a very excellent relationship.



Harold Smith

DSM: Harold Smith, who was Director of the Bureau of the Budget, at the time that I was recommended to follow Milton Eisenhower as Director of the War Relocation Authority, was another gentleman for whom I learned to have a high regard.

Smith happened to be the man President Roosevelt looked to for recommendations regarding the administration of W.R.A. because it was set up as an independent agency and was reporting "only to God." So Harold Smith was the man that I went to see rather regularly. I never walked into his office what he didn't grin at me and say "Dillon, you know I am not your boss." I would say "Yes, I know you are not my boss but you are the one man that knows something about the W.R.A. problems and I need somebody to talk to," so he would listen. We talked many many times. He was most kind to me and served not only as someone to talk to to get things off my chest but as an advisor from time to time.

Harold Ickes

DSM: Much to my surprise, Harold Ickes was one of the best bosses that I ever had. I was reluctant to go to the Department of Interior partly because Ickes during the time I was in Agriculture was always in a scrap with Agriculture. I didn't find out until quite a long time later that he also had some reservations about me. He was the kind of person who was known as the "Old Curmudgeon" but he had a rule which I appreciated very much namely that he would see any bureau chief in his department within a twenty-four hour period and sooner if the emergency required it. I could always call up and get an engagement. Usually if I called in the afternoon or evening I could get one the next day. While I was supposed to report





through Under Secretary Abe Fortas it was quite well understood that I could always see the Secretary.

On several occasions I did have some difference of opinion with Under Secretary Fortas and we went to Harold Ickes with our problem. I always got the kind of support that I felt a boss should give.

Secretary Ickes required that everybody submit their agendas for travel to him at least three days ahead of travel time, so that he could countermand the order if he thought we shouldn't go. When I was about to leave on a trip to the West Coast which included a speech in Los Angeles. About six o'clock in the evening I got a little note from Ickes which said "I don't think this is anytime to be making speeches. Furthermore I'm concerned about the amount of gasoline and oil you are planning to use on this trip and I don't think the trip should be made." The reference to gasoline and oil was due to the fact that he was responsible for wartime conservation of these commodities.

As a result of this little orange colored note I called up his secretary and said "Eleanor I want to see your boss and I want to see him now." She said "Just like that." I said "Yes, just like that." She said "How about eleven o'clock tomorrow morning?" I said "Fine." At eleven o'clock the next morning I arrived on the scene and when I was told that he was available, I walked into his long office with this little orange colored note between my finger and thumb. I walked the full length of the office holding the little note in my fingers and laid it on the corner of his desk and I said "Mr. Secretary, I want to talk to you about the note you sent me and about my plans for the trip." He said "All right, go ahead." So I explained to him exactly why I was going.

I started out by saying that I had been in Government for quite some time and that I had never yet made a trip on Government funds which I felt was not justified from the standpoint of expenditures, and I didn't intend to start now. I felt very strongly that this was one of the more important trips that I had scheduled during the W.R.A. days. He listened to me with great care, never said a word until I finished. Then he simply



said "All right, go ahead." This was Harold Ickes at his best. He always would listen and if he respected you he would pay attention to what you said. This was the type of battle that I won a number of times.

Harold Ickes became a retiree after he blew himself out of the Department of Interior by fighting the appointment of the gentleman who was recommended as Secretary of the Navy. Consequently, the recommendation which he had made to the President that I become an Assistant Secretary of Interior was never sent to the Senate.

#### Matters Of Importance That I Have Learned From Experience

DSM: Some of the things that I learned rather early in my work after I got out of college included such things as the importance of securing participation on the part of the people you were working with if you expected them to enjoy the wonderful feeling that results from participation and accomplishment.

I learned this very definitely in my early county agent work when I met with a group of people in the Blue Grass neighborhood where we met all day long in the wintertime. What we did there was to ask the participants to bring in samples of corn, potatoes and various things that we were going to talk about, and then ask them to discuss their own methods of doing things which lead to a discussion in which I simply served as a moderator. I saw to it that the discussion moved ahead and usually they would ask me to summarize and add my comments at the end. This procedure led to real interest, real enthusiasm and in my judgment it was highly important.

Very early in my county agent experience I learned the importance of remembering peoples' names and faces. My first office caller came in to ask a question and I didn't have the answer and I told him to return the



next time he was in town, which he did. When he came in I said "Good morning, Mr. Pierce," and I thought he would faint, he was so pleased and surprised that I had remembered him. This little incident made me realize that this was highly important to people. So we established a system in our office that would help us to remember names and faces by developing a file of all visits in the field or to the office, and what we talked about, so that when we put it into the file it was pretty well fixed in mind. This stood me in good stead throughout many years.

I remember one instance after I had been in extension work for ten years or more, including service as county agent in Columbus, Ohio, during Farmer's Week I used to go to my office through the hallway of the Agricultural Building where groups of farmers were registering or visiting. Naturally I stopped to speak to a lot of people and called them by name as I went through. One day as I was going down the hall a Mr. Reasnor who had a stand where he was promoting the sale of farm paper subscriptions followed me, tapped me on the shoulder and said "Mr. Myer, I want to ask you a question." I said "All right." He said "Do you know everybody in Ohio?" I said "No. I don't know everybody in Ohio but I know a lot of people who live in Franklin County and I know some other people from around the state." He said "I have watched you for the last three days as you have come through here, you have shaken hands with everybody, you have called everybody by name." I grinned and said "I think I may have overlooked a few." But it was true that I had learned the importance of remembering names and faces.

Because of certain experiences that I had in county agent work I learned that it was very important before I started on a project to bring all elements into the picture and this means that I learned the necessity for planning even small details. This grew out of the experience which I have already mentioned regarding the oversight in not alerting dealers to the fact that I was recommending new varieties of soy beans and consequently when the farmers called for them they weren't available. The dealers as well as the farmers were quite upset because they had varieties that weren't adapted and as a result I had to do something about





correcting my mistakes. I tried to avoid such mistakes in my future planning. It is important to face up to mistakes and oversights and to see to it that they are corrected if at all possible. This early experience helped to fix that into my mind so firmly that I didn't forget it throughout the years.

I learned also the importance of keeping an open mind, keeping flexible and open to constructive criticism. I have already mentioned the fact that the county superintendent of schools who went with me to meetings pointed out things that my use of language was not adapted to the audience to whom I was speaking.

Also the incident when Fred Trueblood, the managing editor of the Evansville Courier Journal, arranged to have lunch with me and pointed out that I needed publicity whether I thought I did or not in order to get my job done, and as a consequence I practically wrote their farm page every Friday and reported meetings. An interesting by-product of this was that I learned a great deal about the newspaper game by dropping in after meetings. These experiences pointed up the need for an open mind and the importance of keeping flexible. It is something that everyone should learn particularly if they are going to work with the public.

### Supervisory Techniques

DSM: In regard to techniques used in supervision, I think the major one that I discovered rather early in my supervisory experience was the importance of studying each individual with whom I was working, whether in the field, in meetings, in the office or at home, to learn all I could about him both as to his strengths and weaknesses. Then I was ready when the time came, and there always is a right time to make suggestions. It is not always the right time when you first think of it. It is time when a proper opening occurs and you have an opportunity particularly to use an example



to drive home a point. This I believe is probably the most important technique in the supervision of people. I asked one of my former county agents recently what occurred to him as being important in my supervisory work. He said "Well, the first thing I think of is you very soon learned more about me than I had learned about myself."

In my supervisory experience after World War I as indicated earlier there were several agents in my area who had been appointed during the emergency and who were not well adapted to county agent work. It was important that they move out of that job and into something to which they were better adapted. I became convinced rather early in the game that it was important to help a person who was not adapted to the job to make the adjustment as quickly as possible into something where he was better adapted. It was good for the person as well as for the work at hand. I followed this policy throughout the years. It wasn't always easy to tell somebody that he should move into another job but it was easier in the long run because when you dilly-dally about making adjustments that it is quite obvious must be made, it gets worse rather than better.

Another major factor in supervision is teaching by specific example rather than using generalizations. This goes back again to timing. I found that if I recognized a weakness and then if I took time to try to find an example that would illustrate not only what that weakness was but how it could be corrected, it was better than to barge in and talk about the weakness before you had fully analyzed the situation and before you had a specific example or suggestion as to what to do about it.

I learned another very important fact about reports from one of the Washington supervisors in my early days of county agent work. I was harping about the fact that many monthly and long annual reports were irksome and I wondered if anybody ever did anything about them or ever utilized them after they were written. It was pointed out to me that this was the wrong approach in thinking about reports; that basically reports properly prepared and properly thought through were most important to the individual in his work than



they were to the people who read them, whoever those people were. The reason is that good reporting requires sitting down, taking inventory regarding accomplishments, where you have been, the kind of things that have happened. This laid the basis for future planning in a way that isn't possible otherwise.

After getting this point of view I found reporting a much different and pleasanter task than it was earlier. I tried to pass this on to people who found reporting irksome and I think I cured many people of being upset about making reports when they began to realize it was important to themselves as well as to others.

Preparation and planning for the work ahead is of first importance whether it means planning a speech, thinking through on what may happen at a meeting, what participation you are going to be called upon to enter into, what kind of contribution it is possible to make, or any other phase of any project that involves complex situations.

I remember quite distinctly that during World War II when I often went to Capitol Hill to meet with committees of Congressmen from California and other West Coast States. A certain cabinet member who went along was sometimes quite eloquent when he was stirred but most of the time he fumbled because it was clear that he had not prepared himself for what he was going to say or what he was going to do.



## CHAPTER XVI

## THE YEARS AFTER 1953

A Temporary Retirement

DSM: On March twentieth 1953 I retired temporarily. I spent four months resting. The first month was fun. I would get up in the morning, get The Washington Post and climb back into bed and read the paper in bed. I did a lot of loafing and resting. At the end of the first month I found that I had had about all of that that I wanted and I was sure that Jenness had had about enough of me, because I was beginning to get itchy. So I began to look around to see what there was for me to do. I soon came to the realization that there was no job in the Government in Washington where I could go to work because they weren't going to allow anybody who had had three Presidential appointments in the past twenty years to be on the payroll during the Republican regime. So what to do?

Group Health Association

DSM: It so happened, along about a week or two after I began to be concerned about keeping busy, I had a call from one of the committee who had been appointed by the Group Health Association to find a new Executive Officer, who asked if I would consider the job. I told him "Yes, I would consider the job, but I would like to talk about it further."

He said that the board would insist that whoever took the job would be agreeable to signing a contract





to stay on at least two years.

I said "Well, I'm sorry but I don't think that is a good idea. I don't think they would want to keep me two years if they weren't happy with me. Furthermore I don't think they would want to keep me for two years if I weren't happy with my job at Group Health. As a consequence you tell the board that I might be interested but I would not be interested on the terms that you have just suggested." So the job had gone out the window as far as I knew.

#### The Hand Of Fate Intervenes

DSM: About a week later I had lunch with James Mitchell who was formerly Commissioner of the Civil Service Commission and now of Brookings Institution. Jim and I were good friends and he said "Dillon, what are your prospects?" I said "Well, I have only had one and I guess that has gone out the window." I explained to him what had happened. He said "Do you know that I am a member of the Group Health Board of Directors?" and I said "No, I didn't know that." He said "Do you mind if I reopen this question?" and I said "No, I don't mind. I am not asking anybody to do this sort of thing for me but if you would like to do it I don't mind."

I got another call. They said they would like to talk with me and I went down to talk with them and the upshot of it was that I signed up as Executive Director of Group Health, and went to work the first of July 1953 and spent more than five years in that particular spot.

Group Health Association is a medical cooperative that was organized in late 1937 or 1938 by the Home Owners Loan Corporation personnel office. The agency put up forty thousand dollars to start the program off. They needed a little money to hire doctors and to get



other things going before the membership got under way. This was fortunate, because if that forty thousand dollars hadn't been provided Group Health Association never would have been able to make it. The chief of the agency had to answer to Congress later on for this financial help but he did a good job of defending his position and got away with it.

I became a member along with my family in 1938, when they first opened up the membership rolls to other government agencies outside of H.O.L.C. and I have been a member ever since excepting for a couple of years around 1940 to 1941 when I became a little discouraged with their seemingly insoluble problems and we dropped out for a time, but we went back in in just a few months so that I have been a member for most of the last thirty years.

At the time that I took over the job as Executive Director of Group Health in July 1953 there were about eighteen thousand five hundred participants. By the time I left a little over five years later we numbered around twenty-three thousand five hundred with a new group coming in which would bring it up to around twenty-five thousand. The District of Columbia transit workers group were just then being accepted as members into the agency.

My major activity during 1953 and most of 1954 was that of trying to strengthen several of the administrative and supervisory areas. A professional administrative analyst group had been called in about a year before I became Director, which had reviewed the pattern of the organization and made recommendations regarding the organizational pattern as well as other suggestions. Most of these had already been accepted and activated and I didn't feel that I wanted to do anything about changing the pattern generally at that time.

In addition to the medical division, there were three other divisions: the clinical division; the finance and records office; and a membership division concerned with getting and maintaining members as well as keeping membership records.



One of my first jobs was to establish a sound liaison and understanding with the medical director and the medical staff. Fortunately this didn't take long. Henry Litchenberg was Medical Director in addition to being the chief of Pediatrics. Henry and I established a pattern of having weekly luncheons together to review anything that we had not had time to take up during the previous week. We established certain ground rules early in the game which kept us from getting into each other's hair. He was responsible for the medical program and I was responsible for the general administration including the personnel problems that we faced in regard to other personnel in the shop including those who were in the finance office, the records office, the nurses and the assistants in the medical program and the personnel people.

There were two major areas in which Henry Litchenberg and I didn't agree. One of them was that I felt quite strongly after I had been there for a short time that the records which had been developed throughout the years and which were no longer active should be utilized for research purposes. There were various problems that the doctors were interested in having some answers to, which would also benefit the membership. Henry felt very strongly however that patients had been told the records were personal, were private and shouldn't be used. So we never got the chance to use them for this purpose, even though I was convinced that to do so would not have broken the confidentiality of individual patients' records.

The other problem which I felt needed improving was our procedures for the recruitment of doctors. I made suggestions from time to time that key doctors, key heads of divisions and the Medical Director might go out to medical colleges near graduation time to try to interest some young doctors in coming to Group Health. We would thus have had a better selection than we would by simply waiting for applicants to come along. But I was never successful in convincing them that they should take time off from Pediatrics, Adult Medicine, and other things to do this kind of a job.

One of the first jobs in the administrative and supervisory area that I insisted be done was the





installation of a classification and job writing program because they had no job descriptions on any of the personnel. They were hired orally and off hand and I pointed out that I thought our turnover was due in part to misunderstandings that had developed because they didn't remember all of the things that they were supposed to do. So during the first six months in particular and during most of a year in the clinic area the division chiefs were busy writing job sheets but we got them done and in good shape and they were utilized. We saw to it that each applicant for a job got to read the job description, and to have a copy if he wished for his own use, of the job that he was expected to fill. It was how we were able to cut down the turnover, mainly because of the classification system, the job descriptions and more thorough recruitment procedures. This is one of the main things that I think I contributed during the first few months.

One other thing we did in the personnel area was to eliminate a few people who were not efficient from a few key spots. We established a plan for having meetings with the supervisors from the different areas from time to time. Early in the game we did it every week or two and when we had these meetings the first thing on the agenda was to give the supervisors a chance to tell me and the division heads what problems they needed help with if they could get it. Following this listing of problems we established some methods of finding out for ourselves some of the problems in the shop.

One problem was the tendency on the part of employees when they were asked a question to which they didn't have the answer, to refer the caller to somebody else, without knowing whether the other person had the answer or not. On two or three occasions patients told me they were referred to as many as five or six different people to get the answer and they still hadn't gotten it.

At one of our supervisors' meetings I made it quite clear how we expected this matter to be handled. One, we were not to speculate on what the answer was, nor were we to speculate on who had the answer. If they weren't sure of answers to questions, the caller



was to be referred to the division head, whether it was finance, clinic, or membership; or to the Executive Director. When this rule was laid down and accepted we had no more complaints of this type. This seemed a little thing but it had been going on evidently for quite a long time.

Another problem was a tendency on the part of some of the staff to engage in quarrels with patients or members who came in in a militant mood. Very often patients were in a militant mood and wanted to scrap with somebody. I had long ago recognized that there were certain people that liked to beat people around if they thought they could get away with it but they did not try it with top people, because they were sure they couldn't get away with it. So we laid down another rule which was accepted by the supervisors and passed along to the staff and which functioned almost perfectly. This was that if somebody started being difficult that they do what telephone operators did in those days when a caller got rough with them. They said "I will give you the Chief Operator". In our case it was not the Chief Operator but the division head, the clinic head, or the Executive Director again. This practically cured that particular problem in a very short time.

We also established training meetings for such simple things as how to answer a telephone, how to greet members, and how to utilize the telephone. We got some people over from the telephone company to put on a demonstration and it was amazing what a difference this made throughout the whole shop. The staff now answered the telephone by saying who they were and giving some information about themselves. Also telephone courtesy was emphasized as well as passing along the caller to the right people if they needed to be referred elsewhere.

At the suggestion of the clinic supervisor, I started making regular trips throughout the shop. Just wandering around up and down the aisles, into the laboratories, into the dental offices, back of the scenes into the medical offices accomplished two things.



One was that the staff were aware that I was interested in what was going on. They probably assumed that I was checking on whether or not the procedures that had been established were being carried out, but the main thing that was accomplished and it was important, was the developing acquaintanceship with the personnel behind the scenes -- being able to greet them and have them feel that somebody was interested in what they were doing. I did this usually two or three times a week, although it depended on how much time I had to do this kind of thing.

We had a real problem in the dental area because we were losing money nearly every year. So we established a system of records which came to my office each month which helped us to put our fingers on where the weaknesses were and where the losses were in time and income. As a consequence in a very few months time we had the dental clinic up in the black and were able to make certain recommendations that eliminated lost time and kept everybody busy at the chair. There were two or three dentists that weren't too happy about this because they enjoyed the opportunity to do a little loafing on the side but nevertheless it did work out.

One of my very important problems, and it was a problem, was my dealings with the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee was outdated but was maintained mainly because the two or three doctors who were members wanted to be able to say to other doctors who raised the question that they did have a part in policy formation. The Executive Committee met between Board meetings and usually we repeated everything that we had gone over in the Board. So it was duplication but we weren't able to get rid of it.

We had on the Board of Trustees, in those days, two or three people who had objected to my appointment and didn't hesitate to use the needle at every meeting about budgets, about this, that or the other but in particular who took long hours of time to talk at length about things they felt they knew more about than the administration did. It became quite boresome and I became impatient.





For example, early in my regime Mark Coleborn, a board member, insisted that the board send out a questionnaire to all the personnel under my general supervision to find out what their gripes were. I put my foot down rather strongly and said I thought I could find out what their gripes were. Fortunately the majority of the board supported me.

I asked Coleborn for a list of things that he wanted to talk about and he took time off from his job one day and came over to the office and we spent two or three hours together. From that time on he and I personally got along pretty well although he was always difficult in board meetings because he usually had some point of view that was different than that of the majority of the board.

Another fetish of his and of Bill Reines was that the audit should be an administrative audit. This meant that they felt that Group Health should hire auditors who would not only audit the finances but would go into the problems of administration generally, and studying what the administration was doing and make comments and recommendations regarding it. This I opposed with the argument that if they didn't have confidence in my administration all that they needed to do was tell me, and I would submit my resignation and they could find somebody in whom they did have confidence in; but they never let up. I got a bit tired of this kind of quibbling but I got more tired and more impatient sitting through long, drawn-out meetings where little or nothing was accomplished.

We started negotiations well before my last year with Group Health with the Transit Workers Union, a group that are now members and have been since the fall of 1958. After carrying on the negotiations for quite some time and reporting back to the board, some of the board members felt that I wasn't doing well enough so they appointed a committee of three to take over and they did the negotiating. They made some concessions which I didn't feel were fair to the rest of the membership, so in September 1958 I submitted my resignation. My agreement called for a sixty day notice and I continued my work until November fifteenth.





There were three major reasons why I decided not to carry on. Probably the most important one was that I was a bit bored by this time because I wasn't really busy over half of the time. I didn't want to take over any of the jobs of the division heads or to get my fingers into things that they were doing well. We had cut down the gripes on the part of members to the point where I didn't get very many of those and as a consequence I was only busy at the time when we were preparing budgets, or getting ready for board meetings, making reports or in my routine trips around the clinic which I made a couple of times a week in order to keep in contact with what was going on.

I had meetings with my division heads and supervisors from time to time but I still wasn't busy and I wasn't very happy in not being busy. I was bored with the board meetings and I came to the conclusion that it was not the type to work for a group of people. I would rather have one boss.

The other item which probably brought things to a head at that particular moment was our disagreement with the committee and with the board on the certain phases of the contract that was made with the Transit Workers. This was simply a straw on top of the other things. So I left the Association November 15, 1958.

I think I should add that my relationships with the personnel, that was my responsibility to deal with, was excellent. It was a very happy relationship. We got along beautifully and all through each month up until the time of the board meeting. There wasn't an unhappy moment from that standpoint, except that I didn't have enough to do. Our division heads were quite cooperative and very loyal and I still enjoy going down to Group Health and spending an hour or two wandering around seeing some of the old timers who are still key people on the job and it's a great satisfaction to me to know that they are still there and that they are glad to see me.

This finishes the comments about my work with the Group Health Association and we are now going to talk about the job I took on for the United Nations as a so-called "expert" in the field of public administration at Caracas, Venezuela.



### A Move To The United Nations

DSM: During the fall of 1958 after I left my job on November fifteenth with Group Health, I talked with my friend the late Bill Howell who was executive officer of the International Bank about the possibility of some international service that I might find interesting and where I could be helpful. He suggested that I get in touch with Herbert Emerich of the United Nations and let him know of my availability. This I did. I had known Herb Emerich for a good many years. As a matter of fact he had preceded me by some time as Commissioner of the Public Housing Administration. I had known him also in other capacities.

My contact with him resulted in an offer to go to Venezuela as, as I have indicated above, an expert in the public administration field. I might say that I don't like the term "expert" but this is the term that the United Nations used and this was a part of my title. I never used it when I was on the job. I was a representative of the United Nations in public administration.

### And To Venezuela

DSM: The reason why the United Nations was involved there was the fact that the U.N. was invited to send a representative down to Caracas following the coup which eliminated the former dictator Perez Jimenez better known as P.J. The Minister of Finance requested that someone make a survey of the needs of the government in the field of public administration. So Herbert Emerich did this survey during the late spring and summer of 1958 and made a series of recommendations most of which were carried out.

Herbert Emerich's report indicated that he found great determination in Venezuela at that time to accelerate the economic and social development of the country. Because of this announced policy he felt



that it was important that they do something about the modernization of their administrative procedures. He felt that in order to carry out their programs successfully it would involve an unusual partnership between private and public sectors and that there should be better communication between the government and the private sector. In order to make the program effective a sustained effort was necessary to up-grade the capacity in the public administration area of Venezuela in order to enable it to discharge the responsibilities of its share of the partnership efficiently, and to satisfy the general expectations that had been raised in connection with the proposed reforms.

The principal administrative needs, as he outlined them, included an improvement in government organization, with more clearly defined functions; a simplification and expedition of government procedures; a central and modernized system of fiscal controls, development of economic data as a basis for better control and for decision-making on policy matters. Above all, a vastly improved system of public personnel administration and training was needed.

Another phase of the problem that he felt must be considered was the problem of what is generally called delegation and participation to relieve the undue congestion of routine business at the top in the various agencies. He indicated that while the United Nations personnel could help and advise, it couldn't perform the task itself in doing the kind of modernization job that was essential. As a result he recommended that a temporary national commission on public administration be established, which was carried out promptly. This was based more or less upon his knowledge of what the Hoover Commission had done in the United States upon two different occasions. This commission was to make contributions themselves and to recommend laws and regulations for administrative reform. They would also provide for hiring additional contract personnel to assist them in their program and setting up task forces, etc.

Among other things he recommended that it would be necessary ultimately to create a permanent central office of organization and methods, and to enact a law





for a modern civil service system and modernization of their personnel system generally.

He recommended the adoption of a modern system of obligation and accrual accounting of the revenues and expenditures of the government; strengthening the office of the budget and the Minister of Finance; the appointment of budget officers in the major ministries and autonomous agencies; the perfection of a system of departmental accounts subsidiary to and in harmony with the central accounts and the Ministry of Finance office; and the classification of government transactions on the model of the United Nations system to reveal not only the governmental budget but also the relationship to the total economy of the nation, and with the cooperation and the approval of the Office of the Comptroller General, to study a system which would permit better post audit of public expenditures.

He felt that in the study of organization and methods that the problem of decentralization and the delegation of administrative procedures, were highly important in the interest of relieving the congestion of day-to-day business in the ministries and to create time in the ministries, from excessive routine, for more attention to matters of policy and improvement of administration.

He also felt that simplification of routine procedures with quicker and more efficient service to individual citizens and to the business community was important, and that equal treatment should be provided for by public procedures established under rule of law and that decentralization in a prudent manner of government functions was necessary to achieve a sense of civic responsibility and citizen participation in the states and municipal government. He recommended that the technical assistance program of the United Nations could be utilized in part and recommended the assignment of several different experts who might be helpful, one to be in the field of general public administration and organization and methods; one in finance; one in personnel; and one in training. In addition to this, he suggested that firms of management consultants be engaged by the Minister of Finance to produce quickly an adequate staff, free from



day-to-day responsibilities for the large amount of detailed survey work analysis and systemization that would have to be done. I believe I am correct in saying that he recommended that two such firms might be adequate. He felt that the staff of such firms were needed particularly in organization and classification studies, installation of new methods, in personnel. He recommended that only management firms that had successful experience in the field of public administration in several countries be considered. They should be attached to the staff personnel of Venezuela for the interpretation of national needs and conditions to enable the staff to benefit from stimulation and training.

When I reported for duty on March 1, 1959 I found three instead of two, contract agencies on the job with a total personnel of twenty-six people who had been hired by the previous temporary executive director of the commission. In addition to that, the recommendations that had been made regarding U.N. personnel were being carried out. I followed John Blandford, who had been in charge of over all general administrative work. He had started work on September first and had agreed to stay only six months so I was to take over following him on March first.

J.D.M. Smith of England was already on the job and functioning as their finance expert and Michael H.H. Loew of the Union of South Africa had been designated as the expert in the training field but had not arrived on the scene as yet but was practically on his way. David Walsh, also of England who was an excellent civil servant in England was hired for a year's service in the field of personnel. He did not come on until April.

The public administration commission had been established soon after Herbert Emerich completed his general survey in accordance with his recommendations. The first executive officer for a few months was a Dr. Lander who was connected with one of the very important and large oil companies in Venezuela but he felt that he needed to get back to his job so Dr. Beneto Raul Losada was the new Executive Director who had been on the job only a short time at the time I arrived on the scene.



My major responsibility appeared to be largely one of coordinator and liaison representative between the various groups. It was a large problem to coordinate the activities of the various contracting agencies, three of them, and the U.N. experts who were functioning in some cases in the same field as the contracting agencies, the commission itself and with the government representatives who were in general charge of the area in which the commission was functioning. This was probably the major task which took up a great deal of time. John Blandford who had preceded me had done a good job in systematizing and organizing the projects that were being carried out by the various contracting agencies as new projects were established. I was responsible for writing up some additional projects and seeing to it that they were accepted by the commission and by the contracting agencies, so that we had a job sheet that we could work to.

I think that I should mention who the three contracting agencies were: The Public Administration Service of Chicago was functioning in the field of government organization; the J.L. Jacobs Associates of Chicago were doing the work in the field of personnel administration; and the Griffenhagen-Kroeger Inc. of the John Diebold Group of New York were working on governmental systems and procedures, particularly in the field of finance.

I neglected to mention in addition to the other U.N. personnel previous to my arrival on the scene Dr. O. Glenn Stahl of the United States Civil Service Commission had served from November 1958 to February 1959 in assisting the Commission in preparing a draft of a new civil service law and presenting it to the Commission and getting it generally approved. It was finally approved after I arrived on the scene but it had been pretty well established before Glenn Stahl returned to Washington.

In April of 1959 Dr. Manuel Perez Guerrero was designated by President Romulo Betencourt as the chief of the central office of coordination and planning and he was also designated as the principal liaison officer between the Commission and the Presidency. Following





the establishment of the Commission in October 1958, some twenty-five Venezuelan coordinators, so-called, and about forty Venezuelan technicians, or really trainees called technicians, were recruited to work as counterparts with the management consultants and the United Nations staff, so that all told we had ultimately five U.N. people, twenty-six people on the staff of the consultant agencies and forty additional people who were assigned to work with the contracting agencies who were Venezuelan, making a total of around seventy-five people; this in addition, to the few additional people working in the general office staff of the Executive Director. There was an executive secretary and a public relations officer in the Commission as well as a secretary, and clerical personnel who were also recruited locally in Venezuela.

The annual budget which was provided by Venezuela was more than one and a half million dollars which was quite a lot of money but nevertheless it was put up freely. Venezuela, being supported largely on oil, didn't seem to worry about it. By March of 1959, the month that I took over from John Blandford, the first twenty projects had been programmed and prepared in written form for approval by the Commission and were approved. In the initiation and implementation of these projects the management consultant firms and the United Nations experts worked closely in collaboration with the Venezuelan coordinators and technicians that were assigned to these projects.

This cooperative effort provided valuable training for the young Venezuelan technicians and they in turn did much of the required work on the studies and the reports and were most helpful, particularly with the problems of language and communication in many areas. The senior U.N. advisors, mainly Mr. Blandford and myself, served as advisors to the Presidential office, to the Public Administration Commission including its staff and the management consultants on matters of program planning, projection and execution, and coordination. In addition I participated in studies and formulation of recommendations in certain areas, attended many conferences with the director of the Commission and with Dr. Perez Guerrero and with the U.N. experts as well as with the management consultants





and with officers of the ministries. It was important to keep fully informed in order to do a more effective job of coordinating the activities.

Much of my time was spent in reading reports of management consultants, also reviewing proposed laws and decrees, reviewing proposed governmental contracts, progress reports, recommendations regarding the organization of offices and agencies and the formulation of project plans. All this required preparation in memorandum form for the Executive Director and many individual conferences with key members of the consultant firms for the purpose of the exchange of information. Projects which were assigned to the management consultants included review of the work of the Presidential office, ministry reorganization, review of the work of the autonomous agencies of which there were several, intergovernmental relations, administrative assistance in the field of agrarian reform, the career civil service bill which has already been mentioned, personnel regulations, personnel classification and compensation, personnel selection standards and techniques, and social security for public employees and also the organization of the Comptroller General's Office, a budget system, a general accounting system, payroll procedures, procurement programs, revenue administration, congressional services, and systems and procedures in the Ministry of Health and the administration of the Federal district which compares with our District of Columbia government, Venezuelan Development Corporation, the Banco Abrero which served the housing area and the National Railway Institute.

HP: This apparently was an herculean attempt to bring Venezuela up to the twentieth century in its government administration.

DSM: That's right. Venezuela, like all Latin American countries that I have ever known, was still running its government much as they were run under the Spanish four hundred years before. There hadn't been too much progress in the revamping of the governmental structure and procedures, and this was an attempt to try to modernize their procedures and develop a program whereby many of the old traditional patterns could be revamped.



There were projects also in the area of personnel training which were supervised by Michael Loew of the U.N. staff. These projects totalled twenty-eight, which had been approved by the Commission and with which we kept in touch at all stages. Unfortunately, up until June of 1960, when I completed my tour of duty, little had been accomplished in the execution of the recommendations which had resulted from the studies and which had been largely completed by the spring of 1960.

### Difficulties In Modernizing The Government

DSM: Well, there seemed to be a great deal of lethargy, plus the fact that people were busy with other things. During the first year of my assignment we were quite optimistic that real progress was being made and that really outstanding accomplishments were possible and likely, in breaking old habits and modernizing government procedures, which so badly needed revision. However, cooperation in most areas came to a dead stop or reached a stalling stage when the execution stage was reached. Old habits established throughout the four hundred years or more, going back to Spanish rule, were so well entrenched that it was most difficult to break them. Passing the buck from bottom to top and the lack of delegation of authority was the general rule.

Nobody below the top man was willing to take the responsibility for making the decision, because he was not given the responsibility which, of course, meant that the whole process of government was slowed up.

Staff members selected because of political or family connections was widespread, antiquated record keeping including hand written copies duplicated many times in some instances, lack of trust on the part of top officials in employees except for a very limited few, was the sort of situation that was handed down from the centuries of dictatorship.



This kind of procedure helped stymie the work after the first of the year along with the fact that President Betencourt was running into a lot of trouble with people who were trying to bring back the former dictator. There were attempts across the border from Columbia to bring about a coup and in addition to that there was all kinds of trouble piling up here and there with shooting and attempts at taking over. As a result Betencourt had many emergencies to face, and as these things began to happen he began to depend almost entirely upon his three key advisors who were the Minister of Mines, the Minister of Finance, and the Chief of Planning and Coordination whom I have mentioned Manuel Perez Guerrero, whom we depended upon to get things done in the government.

As a result, the President was so busy with this, that and the other that in spite of the fact that he had given strong support to the Commission, we did not get any support from him, to my knowledge, in pressing the different ministries to go ahead with the program that had been outlined in connection with the studies jointly with the ministries. Also, Perez Guerrero was so busy working with the President that he did not have much time to do much about it, so the whole situation bogged down in nearly all areas of the government.

The only ministry that really did much about what was recommended was the Ministry of Health and they did a pretty good job. The minister himself was interested; he not only worked closely with the consultant agencies in getting studies made and procedures worked out which would be adopted, but suggested other areas where he wanted work done. And he saw to it that many of the recommendations were put into effect. It was the real bright spot in the whole government at the time.

In addition to the other problems was the one that it had been traditional for top people to make all of the decisions. This meant that there was a great lack of trained supervisors, especially at the third and fourth level. In nearly all cases the Ministers and their deputies handled the business, made the decisions and things filtered up to them. They were so busy handling every day emergencies that it was difficult to get their ear about any changes.





Incompetent people in key areas, and reluctance to make replacements where people were incompetent, was another factor in the situation. As a result of the complete bog-down of the recommendations, nobody did any thing about pushing the civil service bill through the Congress which had been recommended in 1959 and it was not passed during my regime. Most recommendations resulting from other projects were ignored except as I have already mentioned by the Ministry of Health. It was a great disappointment.

About the time that I planned to leave in June 1960, Dr. Losada who had been the Executive Director of the Commission, was moved over to be Deputy to the Minister of Finance and the chap who was brought in to replace him was Dr. Lopez Gallagos who had served as a member of the Commission. Unfortunately Dr. Gallagos was not happy in the presence of "gringos" and he was so politically minded that he put personal ambitions above the work of the Commission. He didn't actually take over until after I left but I knew him personally quite well and I got reports, of course, from the consultants and others as to what had happened later. So the work of the Commission suffered very greatly when Dr. Losada moved over.

Dr. Losada did his best to keep it on a high level and to avoid some of the pitfalls which had been usual in Venezuelan procedures throughout the years such as depending upon people who were friends and were looking for jobs rather than trying to get people who were really qualified.

My assignment called for one year. I was asked to contract for a second year, but since it was an election year in the United States in 1960 I did not want to be away for the whole year because I was still a young man who wanted to consider the possibility of taking on a job with the new administration. As a matter of fact, I hoped that I might be able to help with the campaign. So, although I was asked to extend my stay for another year, I agreed to stay only another three months which ended up in late June 1960.

As it turned out, I was glad I had not agreed to stay on, in view of the fact that Dr. Losada had



decided to leave and that Dr. Lopez Gallagos was going to take over, because I was sure that we would not have been very happy together.

The very day that Jenness and I left for Panama, where we were going to stop off to visit friends and to do some sightseeing, an attempt upon President Betencourt's life was made, about fifteen minutes after our plane left the ground. The car was dynamited, the chauffeur was killed and the President badly burned, but fortunately he survived. When we got to Panama we had dinner with friends that evening and the host brought home a paper telling the story of the bombing and the fact that the borders of Venezuela had been closed for a few hours almost immediately after we took off. They kidded us by telling us "We know now why you left Venezuela; you got out just in time." We really did get out just in time because if we hadn't gotten off just when we did it would have been several hours before we would have been able to leave the country.

### Social Life In Venezuela

DSM: When we had first arrived in Venezuela we stayed at a hotel for a short time, until we could find an apartment. During that stay at the hotel they were short on water and water was carried in with a bucket for us for two or three days while repairs were being made. So we didn't have a very pleasant stay for the first two weeks, until the Blandfords left and we took over their apartment which was close to the hotel and in the part of town where it was less dangerous than it was down in the old section of the city.

It was expensive to live in Venezuela, much more expensive than it is in the States. Fortunately for us we got along very well indeed for the reason that the U.N. had a policy which favored a family of two as compared with a family of four or five. We received



the same fringe benefit allowance for family care and maintenance as a family of four or five received. It was difficult for a family with several children to live on this extra allowance because of extremely high costs, but we could almost live on our expense account and the cost-of-living differential and spent very little of our salary during the fifteen months that we were there for actual living costs. If we spent any of our salary it was because we travelled which we did occasionally.

After about a month or six weeks in the Blandford apartment we found another apartment in the same building which was better situated with an excellent view and more space. So we really had very good living conditions. We were most most fortunate. A United Nations car was assigned to our group, which took us to the office and brought us home for our siestas and took us back to work in the afternoon, and brought us home in the evening. Furthermore, if we were invited to official parties the chauffeur picked us up, took us to the party and brought us home. So we had good transportation and an excellent driver which was fortunate, because driving is not easy in Latin America and in Caracas in particular it is a dangerous business if you don't know your way around.

There was quite a lot of social activity during several months. We were invited to a number of social affairs both small and large by government representatives including Perez Guerrero who was working closely with us. The consultant groups also entertained on occasion, and we were always invited to those along with representatives of the Venezuelan government.

Parties start late in Venezuela. I remember particularly we were invited to Dr. Lopez Gallagos house to a party one night and the invitation said nine o'clock. We arrived promptly at nine o'clock a la American and when we arrived I am sure they were embarrassed, because they weren't ready for us. Our host, who didn't speak English very well, tried to entertain us because there was nobody else there to do it. His wife was better at it than he was and she was most gracious to Jenness, but it was about





an hour before everybody else came. We had thought it was a cocktail party and drinks were served and then the other people began to roll in and about the time we thought we ought to be going home around eleven thirty or twelve o'clock, they came in and asked Jenness to accompany the hostess out into a patio in which there was a long table loaded with all kinds of food and a big dinner was served. I don't remember what time we got away from there but after dinner they served drinks again. The party went on for many hours.

This is typical; any number of times we were invited to cocktail parties and then when we prepared to leave after an hour or two, the hostess would come around with great surprise and say "Why we are going to serve dinner after while. Won't you stay on?" Dinner was usually served anywhere from twelve to one-thirty in the morning.

One thing that interested us: We were told that we need not expect any invitations to the homes of Venezuelans, that they might give official parties at a hotel but not into their homes. On the contrary we were invited to Dr. Losada's home on at least three occasions which we thoroughly enjoyed. Other Americans were also invited. I have already mentioned that we were invited to Dr. Lopez Gallagos house along with some of the other U.N. representatives at least and we were invited to a couple of other homes. So we weren't blocked out entirely from entertainment in homes of our friends whom we had made down there.

### Travel Through The Country

DSM: In addition to our experience in Caracas I was fortunate in having the opportunity to travel throughout Venezuela. The head of the P.A.S. consultant firm asked the Executive Director to send me along with their staff members who were going to visit the area in western Venezuela near the Columbian line. I spent





nearly a week in the Andes country and in the valleys in that area including a visit to the University at Merida where we had interviews with the President and with his staff. Merida was all dressed up for an anniversary. The city had been established four hundred years before and they had really dressed the town up. It was beautiful, one of the loveliest towns I visited in Venezuela.

One of the things that interested me on this trip, different from what we have in the United States, is that almost every community, certainly every sizable community, has a community-owned slaughter house. Each town slaughters its own animals. We visited a couple of these establishments en route. Around the slaughter house there were hundreds of buzzards just waiting for the offal to be thrown out where they could clean it up. This is an old practice that goes way back.

Also I took a trip south to the Orinoco country with the head of the P.A.S. contract agency. We spent four or five days in that area. Among other things that we did there we interviewed various administrative people and other local and state people. One evening when we were wandering about simply stretching our legs we stopped into the library. We were amazed to find that the library which represented the State of San Fernando de Apura didn't have any more books, if as many, as I have in my own private library at home. Most of the books were official reports of the legislature or something of that kind. It was really sad, because it was so limited, yet the librarian was proud of her library. She showed us through. This was in San Fernando de Apura which was the capital of the state by the same name.

Later on I went to Cumana for a visit to the state of Sucre with the head of the P.A.S. group. Jenness joined me there after a day or two. Again we made a trip out into the countryside to visit some of the institutions and found it most interesting.

While in Cumana, the Governor who until recently had been the Ambassador from Venezuela to Washington, Enrico Tehara Paris, met with us on two or three



occasions. He told us about the work that he was trying to accomplish in the state, and offered us the opportunity to go over to the peninsula of Araya off the coast. It was an arid spot where there were salt works which had been traditional throughout centuries. Salt was still being harvested out of shallow areas of water which were drained off after a time and when dried up workers came in with wheelbarrows and piled the salt in very large mounds. There was tons and tons and tons and tons, because it didn't rain enough there to melt it and until it could be processed and bagged and sent out to the various parts of Venezuela it was safe to leave it in great mounds. We were told that the former dictator, who had been eliminated, had made a contract with an Italian firm to establish a modern system for their salt works and they were almost ready to start operating.

We visited also the salt processing plant, which was an intriguing business. It was all run by electricity, the control room was very complex. It would take some time to really learn what the various gadgets were and what they controlled. This was for refining the salt which was brought in in shallow boats through little canals into this factory and dumped. It went through a process there including grinding, some type of purification, mixing with other elements that were needed and finally ended up in a bag. It went through the whole process right there on this little neck of land.

We wondered what would happen to the thousands of people who had been doing the salt work there when it became mechanized, because it was the only industry on the island.

We also went over to the island of Margarita over the weekend where they dive for pearls. It is a lovely spot and we enjoyed our visit there very much.



## Reflections On The Venezuela Experience

DSM: I'm still wondering how much good the Commission and the contracting agencies and the U.N. representatives did, and whether or not there has been any real development since 1960 in modernization of government in general and government procedures in particular.

I think the most hopeful thing out of our whole experience there was the fact that there were around forty or fifty young men who were fairly well trained in various phases of modern governmental procedures and I am hoping that some of them were able to carry on and help to establish new procedures. However, it is difficult to change the old idea in Latin America that a small group, perhaps twenty to one hundred people, control the country. It is considered perfectly justifiable that they maintain their political power in part by patronage and selection of people regardless of their ability to fill jobs. Often there are two or three times as many people on jobs as are needed. In some cases we found people on jobs and on the government payroll who were doing no work at all for the government but working some place else. Or if they were doing any work, they may do it in an hour or two in the morning and then go off to another job and earn more money some place else. This is a part of the old tradition, I presume.

As I have indicated we left Venezuela in late June. Jenness and I came back by way of Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Mexico. In the first three countries we visited old friends, most of whom had worked as a part of the staff of the Institute of Inter American Affairs in the days when I had been its President. It was a great joy to visit these good people again and find them continuing to do some of the very excellent work that had been carried on throughout the years. In Mexico we simply were tourists, on our way back home.





### Back Home

DSM: When we arrived home we found our grounds so overgrown with two years of spring and summer growth, particularly spring growth, that it took me about three weeks to get the hedges, shrubs and trees pruned back to the place where they should have been kept in the beginning.

The house had been unoccupied except for about two months when some friends who had decided to move back to Washington occupied it until they found some place else to live. Because we were so selective we hadn't been able to find somebody to rent the house. Jenness did not want to take a chance on having families who wouldn't take care of it.

When we finally got things in order along about the first of August 1960 I made a date with my good friend Al Waterston of the International Bank for lunch.

A few days after my call, on the very day we were supposed to have lunch, I got a call from Al. He said "I have a young man in my office that wants to see you and wants to talk with you," and I said "Bring him to lunch." He said "He has a luncheon date but could he make another date?"

The young man was Milton Esman from the staff of the University of Pittsburgh. Milton was interested in finding somebody to take over a seminar that he was scheduled to teach himself that year but found he was unable to handle because the University had received a sizable grant from the Ford Foundation and he was going to have to spend some time administering the grant. So he had come by to see Al Waterston to ask his recommendation on who might be available to handle the course and Al said "Well you came at the right time. I am having lunch with the man who ought to be able to handle it very satisfactorily." So we made a date to meet after luncheon. Milton Esman and I, who I had met in Saigon some two or three years before, had a chat and as a consequence I agreed to take on the job.



### A Graduate School Seminar

DSM: This was a course in the graduate school of Public and International Affairs of which Don Stone was Dean.

The course concerned the theory and practice of technical and economic assistance throughout the world. It was scheduled to meet each Monday in the afternoon for two hours. So from mid-September until December 20, 1960, I commuted from Washington by plane leaving on Sunday evening and coming back on Monday evening after the class work was completed.

It was a part time job, but since it was a new course and nothing had been done in the preparation of course plans, I spent nearly full time for the first two months from mid-August until mid-October outlining the course, selecting and reading reference books in preparation for the meetings on Monday afternoon. I set my sights high enough that it took more time perhaps than some people would have taken because I decided I would not assign reference books either that were required reading or were voluntary reading that I had not read myself. So this in itself involved a lot of reading plus the fact that I scanned many other books in the process of making my selections for the assigned readings.

The seminar included eighteen people in attendance regularly, two of whom were not registered for the course but were simply sitting in because of their interest in the subject but they did participate even though they weren't taking the course for credit.

I found the course highly stimulating. It was not a lecture course in any sense of the word; it was truly a seminar and most of the discussion was carried on by the members of the class. As a result I learned a good deal, both from my own research and from the discussions. Some of these people were quite well experienced. For example, three U.S. Air Force officers were assigned to the University of Pittsburgh for additional work and they were able to contribute substantially when they began to discuss military assistance abroad.



One incident that amused me was that one of the students wrote a paper on what he thought the policy should be on military assistance in Latin America. He was opposed to it, and everybody kidded him, telling him that he had better not let the Air Force see that paper, because they probably would do something about it.

In the meantime I still hoped to help out in the election that year, in the election headquarters in Washington. I tried to convince the people in charge that they had need of one of my experience because I had worked in the 1956 election in particular helping to schedule candidates. But it soon became obvious that anyone over forty years of age with white hair was considered too old by the Kennedy staff. This was probably fortunate since much of my time was taken up with the seminar during September and October which I had not originally anticipated.

In addition to suggestions from Milton Esman regarding the preparation for the course I received a letter from Dean Don Stone setting forth suggestions for the need of a defined plan enough in detail to provide description of particular topics to be taken up at each meeting plus well organized reading assignments, project assignments, and reports or papers to be prepared, etc.

I look back on this particular seminar with a great deal of pleasure not only because of what I learned but because of the contacts that I made during this period.

#### Other Assignments And "Near" Assignments

DSM: In the meantime during the last six months of 1960 I had lunched a couple of times with Henry Labouisse who had headed a study for the International Bank in Venezuela for several weeks during my stay



there and we had become quite good friends. I had heard that Henry had been considered for the Directorship of the International Cooperation Administration during the Eisenhower administration, but that it had been vetoed by the Republican National Committee. So one day while I drove him back to the office after lunch I raised this question and he said that that was true, that he had been all set to take over, but the Republican National Committee decided that he shouldn't. So I said "Well, now, Henry, things are going to change this fall and the Democrats are going to win and you're probably going to get the offer to do the job again. If you do take it on and I'll come down and help you." All of this was said half-jokingly. He said "That's a deal."

Sure enough following my discussions with Henry in early 1961 he was offered the job of Director of I.C.A. which later became the Agency for International Development.

In late January William Mitchell, who was Commissioner of Social Security, called me and said "Dillon, we have just been handed the job by the White House of taking over the Cuban refugee program. Would you like to talk about it? We would like to talk to you," and I said "Yes, I would like to talk about it but I am afraid that I may be committed to Henry Labouisse whose name has not come up for confirmation yet, but I understand that it will, as Director of I.C.A./A.I.D." He said "Well, would you be willing to go down as an consultant during a three or four day meeting which has been called by the former Director of Refugees in Miami of the representatives of the various groups who have been working with them and who they want to help support relocation? The meeting is being called for people all over the country." I said "Yes, I would be willing to do that. I will call Henry Labouisse to see what the status is there." Henry said "Well, Dillon, it is true that I am going to be the new Director but I don't know when I will take over and even if I do it may be some time before we get squared away, so go ahead and work with them if they want you to in the meantime." I told Bill Mitchell this and I said "In view of that situation





maybe you won't want me to go down as consultant." He said "Well let me check with the Secretary."

HP: Which Secretary was this?

DSM: Of H.E.W. The new Secretary was Abe Ribicoff. Bill checked with him and called me back immediately and he said "The Secretary wants you to go by all means."

So I packed my bag for a four-day trip to Miami. This was on Saturday morning. We left by plane and on Monday morning my telephone rang about seven o'clock and it was Bill Mitchell and he said "Dillon, I'm in trouble. The Secretary is arriving on a plane at around noon today and I am to meet him. The first question that he is going to ask me is 'Who do you have to take over on February 1'." (This was three or four days ahead of February 1.) He said "I haven't anybody and I don't know what to do about it and I am calling you to see whether you would continue on and take over for awhile down here until we can work out something." I said "I would be glad to providing it doesn't interfere with any developments with I.C.A. So I will call Henry Labouisse and let you know before noon if possible." Henry Labouisse said he thought it was a fine idea as it would be some time before things developed, and for me to go ahead.

#### A Temporary Assignment

DSM: As a consequence I stayed on from that time until around March seventh as the Director of the Cuban Refugee Program with my office in Miami. This proved to be a most interesting experience.

There were already several thousand Cuban refugees who had come into Miami, most of them by plane, some by boat. The procedure in Cuba was such that if anybody left Cuba at that stage they left everything they owned there. They would have five dollars in their pocket



and that's all. So they actually came destitute.

There were Cubans in Miami who had gotten out earlier and had been able to salvage most of their assets. The very well-to-do Cubans when they saw things developing came earlier. A system had already been established of registering the refugees as they arrived with a background of history, their professional interests, training, etc. This registration program continued and we were registering a thousand to fifteen hundred people a week. The problem that we immediately faced when we took over was the fact that no provision had been made for a welfare program for these people who came in for the most part destitute.

The city of Miami was getting badly worried about the fact that the labor market was, in certain areas, being crowded. There was some objections from Labor already on the jobs and they felt that something should be done about it. So before the H.E.W. staff, including William Mitchell and his immediate staff, left for Washington during the last of January, we sat down and worked out a program which included providing some welfare payments to people who were destitute in Miami and welfare payments for people who were willing to relocate and who were found themselves out of a job later in other areas of the country. Welfare was not provided for people who simply wandered off by themselves. So that during the seven weeks I was there we set up provisions for processing welfare cases, with the people from the State office and worked very closely with them in getting that particular program under way. We paid a great deal of attention, of course, to the question of relocation and how it was being handled and in view of the fact that I had had some experience earlier in relocation affairs with the Japanese American program in W.R.A. during the war, I was able to make some suggestions that were helpful to the various agencies that were carrying on the work. I did have some help from staff members from H.E.W.

I was able to help, I think, to some extent. There were four agencies already at work trying to assist in the relocation program. One of them was the Catholic Welfare Agency which was handling a great majority of the cases because most of the people who



came in from Cuba were Catholics. The Jewish Agency, Hias, had a representative there. The Protestant Church Groups had combined to provide assistance in their area and there is one other agency whose official name I don't remember but which had been in the relocation business for some time. All of these people were working with contracts which had been made with the former refugee director so one of the jobs that I was asked to carry out was to renegotiate contracts with all four of these agencies before I left the job, which I was able to do.

In the meantime I found that many many refugee groups wanted to interview the Director of Refugees. I am talking now about Cubans, professional groups and others. I also learned that the former director had refused to see these groups. I spent quite a bit of time listening to the stories and the complaints of people who felt that maybe they had been overlooked, groups of dentists, groups of other professions that felt that something ought to be done about their work and getting them established in the United States. We spent time giving them a chance at least to feel they had been listened too.

I did very little about revamping the organization of the staff and strengthening the weak spots of the staff because I ~~knew~~ knew that I was going to be there only temporarily. I didn't think I should be making changes if I could avoid it until the new director came on. Every time I talked to Washington, usually two or three times a week, I raised the question with William Mitchell as to whom he had in mind for taking over because I wanted to be back in Washington to be close in touch with what was happening back here.

Finally after five or six weeks he told me that they were going to ask their representative in Miami who was handling the old age assistance program there to take over this job which he did and he was an excellent choice. He was reluctant to leave his other work, but he did leave it but kept some contact with it and finally went back to his original job, but in the meantime I was very happy to have a man of his caliber to take over because he was good and they carried on an excellent program. I keep in touch with





the reports that come out monthly from the refugee office in Miami and it has been very interesting to me to find that there are about one hundred thousand permanent residents in Miami, a quite stable group.

More than one hundred thousand others have been relocated throughout the United States. The number of people who are relocated out of each new group that comes in now is much larger than it was back in the days when I was there. This is normal, because once you get a relocation program rolling to the point where you have areas pretty well established where there are a number of people who as in the Cuban case for example, who speak Spanish and where there is a chance for people to have some association with people they know well it is much easier to get others to go out. We found that during the W.R.A. days and we found it true in the refugee program so that the refugee program has picked up throughout the last four or five years and it is pretty well stablized.

I mentioned one hundred thousand people in Miami. As a matter of fact there was a pretty sizable Latin-American community in Miami before the refugee program got under way, and this increased, of course, with the very large number of Cubans coming over in the meantime.

I went to Miami for four days and I stayed for about seven weeks, pretty close to that. I went down, as I remember it, on the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth of January and I didn't finish up down there until early in March. When I found that I was going to have to stay on I called Jenness and told her I thought she ought to bring me some clean clothes and to come on down. Whish she did and she spent at least a month with me in Miami. We had very pleasant living conditions because we lived in a good hotel in Miami on a quite adequate expense account and developed some pleasant associations with a number of very nice people.

After my return from Miami in early March of 1961 I contacted Henry Labouisse a couple of times but learned that action in regard to the foreign aid program was being maintained pretty much in status quo pending a reorganization. They had established a task force to



review the whole program and organization structure of which Henry Labouisse was made chairman, to consider how the agency should be revamped. This required almost one hundred percent of his time and left little time for the actual administrative job for which he was presumably responsible.

Earlier during December or early January I had been approached by Bill Shepard who was in charge of the I.C.A. Far Eastern region. He wanted me to accept a temporary assignment to Korea to follow up on a public works program which was to be financed in large part by the provision of U.S. surplus products, namely wheat, cotton, and other minor products for use in partial payment to workers who were doing public works jobs in lieu of cash. I had some reluctance to take this assignment out of the U.S., but about mid-April Henry Labouisse called me to say that it was going to be some time before the agency would be reorganized and asked that I consider going to Korea in the meantime to assist on the public works program which was being financed largely by U.S. products.

#### Temporary Assignment In Korea

DSM: I agreed and Jenness and I took off for Korea by way of Rome on about April twentieth.

We went to Korea by way of the eastern route because some of the staff in I.C.A. suggested that I spend a few days in Tunisia to acquaint myself with the public works program there that was being financed with surplus commodities and which had been operating successfully for some time. They thought this was desirable before going on to Korea where they were getting under way with a similar new and larger program. So Jenness sojourned on her own in Rome for three or four days while I went to Tunisia where D.C. Lavergne, an old friend with whom we had spent some time in the Phillipines when he was acting Mission Director in 1957,



was Mission Director of the Tunisian I.C.A. program at the time. The Laverignes asked me to stay with them in their home during my stay, which was most pleasant. I visited many of the distribution points all over northern Tunisia to learn what I could from their experience. This was a most interesting part of our trip because I had not realized how many old Roman ruins there were all over this part of the world. You think normally of the ruins being located in southern Europe and the Middle East but I hadn't realized how many were in Africa. My whole trip in Tunisia was well worth while. I was fully briefed on the program, on the problems, on the successes and I had a most interesting and delightful time with the Laverignes.

After three days in Tunisia I returned to Rome and we took off for Korea by plane. After a short stop-over in Tokyo, Hong Kong and Bangkok we reached Korea on April 27, 1961.

I went to work immediately to acquaint myself with the program and to become acquainted with the Korean Minister in charge of his staff.

During the first three weeks I felt that I had become well enough acquainted with the job to be done and the people responsible and was ready to render some services I realized were needed. The program had gotten well under way and there were some areas particularly where the details of the agreement were not being carried out, especially the fact that in most cases the workers were being paid entirely in surplus commodities, instead of the Korean Government putting up their share of the cash that was originally proposed.

After three weeks we wakened at about two or three o'clock one morning and heard the rat-tat-tat of machine guns! I tried to assure Jenness that it was something else but she knew better. As a matter of fact it was General Park Chung Hi and his insurrectionists who were on their way in to take over the government.

This coup made a tremendous difference in our work over the rest of the period from mid-May until the time we left in early July. Following the coup we never





knew from one day to the next with whom we would be dealing. The first army officer assigned to the area in which I was involved including the public works program appeared to be "just what the doctor ordered." He was intelligent, understanding and agreeable to the correction of some of the procedures which we felt badly needed correction, but at the end of about ten days he was transferred to another job before he had a chance to do anything about the things that we had suggested. During the first six weeks in Korea we had to deal with three different ministers.

The program which had been well thought through and well planned involved the hiring of many people on planned projects throughout the whole of South Korea on such jobs as road construction or realignment of roads, reclamation projects of various types, drainage projects where this was desirable in order to provide more land for cultivation, and similar types of constructive work. The plan was that wheat in particular, cotton in some cases, and other surplus projects that we shipped in, were to be used in part payment to the workers in the various communities. Consequently it involved setting up storage places in every area where work was being carried on, in order that payment could be made regularly week after week.

In addition to the surplus products there was a certain amount of cash to be provided by the Korean government. We found in our early visits to some of the projects that the cash part of it was missing, that the payment was being made entirely with the surplus products. This was one of the things that we called to the attention of the Minister and his staff very early. I was not there, of course, as a watch dog or an inspector, but nevertheless it did bother me that the terms of the contract was not always being handled as they should have been.

I have already mentioned that the first man assigned after the coup didn't last more than ten days before he was transferred to another area. After about two or three more weeks I suggested that we take a long field trip across Korea to check more in detail on the distribution centers. This was agreed to and Jack Anderson, who was working with me, and I along with a





Korean Colonel who had been assigned and two of his Korean aides took a land rover car and started out.

We had a most rugged but interesting trip. I thought that we had learned a great deal that was worth while toward the implementation of the program in the future and toward the correction of some of the things that I felt should be corrected. However the very next day after we returned to Seoul the Colonel who had spent a couple of weeks touring with us to find out what was going on, was transferred to another job. This was typical of the type of problem that I ran into day after day and week after week during the rest of the time that we were there.

It was an interesting two or two and a half months but little was accomplished on the program as far as any contribution that I was able to make, because of this personnel turn-over every three or four days. This was a period, of course, of chaos when the new military government had taken over after the coup and they were trying to adjust people to various jobs. In some cases they fired a lot of people because they felt that they should have been in the army long before and weren't. Some of them were arrested and put in jail because of the fact that they weren't in the army. It was not a very happy situation from the standpoint of getting work done.

I had full support from Ray Moyer, who was the Director of the Mission, and John Heilman who was the Deputy during the time that I was there. They did everything they could to assist me in getting the job done. Also I had full support from the Acting Ambassador Green, who was quite interested in the program and who kept in touch.

### A Stop Off In India

DSM:           During the time that I was in Korea, Douglas Ensminger who was in charge of the Ford Foundation



program in India visited Seoul because he was on the program of an international meeting that they were having there. He came to see me and talked about the program in Tunisia and in Korea and said that he thought that it was something that they should be interested in in India. He asked if I would be willing to stop in India on my way home. I told him that of course I would providing the I.C.A. people felt that it was a desirable thing to do. After he returned to New Delhi I got word from Tyler Wood who was the I.C.A. director in India, that the idea had been approved and he had arranged for the approval by the I.C.A. in Washington. Consequently Jenness and I went to India en route back to the United States and spent a most interesting week during July of 1961.

Ty Wood and his staff were most gracious and helpful as was Doug Ensminger and his staff of the Ford Foundation. I had several interesting meetings with the top members of India's planning staff who were responsible for their series of five year programs that had been launched. We were provided the opportunity to visit a demonstration village north from New Delhi and on the weekend Doug Ensminger supplied us with a car and chauffeur to take us to Agra to see the Taj Mahal which, of course, was a thrill.

In the meantime we had the opportunity to see the Indian countryside between New Delhi and Agra. We found in India, as we found in some of the other countries, that one of the very real problems in carrying out a program of this kind was the lack of trained people or the lack of competent people at the local level who had had any basic education at all to take over and be responsible for a program of this type. This was one of the problems in South Korea.

Returning from Korea on our way home, we stopped again briefly in Hong Kong, and before reaching India, Bangkok, and in London for a day to see friends who were with us in Caracas, Venezuela in 1959 and 1960.



Chairman Of A Personnel Review Board

DSM:       Upon our return to Washington in late July Henry Labouisse asked that I serve as chairman of an executive personnel review board. During the whole month of August I was busy with files and board meetings during which time we reviewed the records and secured information from people who knew about the work of one hundred fifty-two staff members who were in the top echelons of the foreign aid program throughout the world. We completed a report on each one for the Director. It was a pleasant assignment because we had an excellent board to work with.

          In the meantime the reorganization pattern was shaping up and Henry Labouisse told me that during this interim he wanted me to take over a new division which was planned -- a division of research and technical cooperation -- in the revised setup once it was finally approved. Before assuming that responsibility, however, he had another assignment for me. It had been decided to review all the cases that were brought before the personnel division in Washington as a result of Public Law 621 which authorized the review and selection out of people who did not meet the standards that they felt were required for the new A.I.D. agency which was finally formed and named. I was asked to head one of the review panels which started work in September. We were busy at this job through the middle of December.

          This was not as pleasant as the executive review procedures which we had just completed because it was dealing with cases that had been recommended by somebody for selection out and we had to decide whether we felt that the recommendation was a sound one or whether it wasn't. Naturally it is not a very happy procedure when you are having to recommend that people be dropped from their jobs.

          During August and September we began to hear rumors that some of the White House young men who President Kennedy had brought in were feeding out material to some of the columnists to the effect that





Harry Labouisse was not tough enough and that a Republican banker should head the program. It was evident there was an attempt on the part of some of the smart young men to run the program from the White House rather than leaving it in the hands of the director.

Harry Labouisse was appointed as Director in February and was almost immediately made chairman of a task force. This required practically all of his time and he never did get a chance really to serve as the head administrative officer. Dr. Dennis Fitzgerald carried most of the job during that period.

#### A Change In Directors

DSM: The upshot of all of this was that Harry Labouisse resigned effective October first and they soon announced that George Wood, a Republican banker from the First Boston Corporation, would replace him. It so happened however that the Washington Post published a story relating to Wood's opposition to the T.V.A. and to cooperatives generally and played the story in the middle of the front page. As a result so much controversy developed regarding Mr. Wood's place in the picture that his name was withdrawn and another name presented. The name of Mr. Fowler Hamilton was hurriedly submitted to the Senate and he took over in December. Of course all of this meant that my appointment into a key spot in the new program went out the window. Possibly the bright young men in the new regime felt that anyone seventy years of age or older was no longer useful. I did continue to serve in the personnel review program until late in December.

During this period I had lunch with Harry Labouisse and learned that he had taken a bundle of the clippings of the various columns that had appeared, many of which appeared in overseas editions, to President Kennedy, who said that he had not known about them and that he



was very sorry. Harry Labouisse told the President, according to his statement, that the pressures were such that he felt that it would be better if he resigned. Which he did. He then told me that Secretary Rusk had called him in and obviously had tried to convey his regret about the whole thing. After a nervous and agitated discussion on Rusk's part he produced a map to show where there were openings or probable openings in embassies throughout the world and practically said "Take your choice." Harry selected Greece and in the early part of 1962 he became the Ambassador to Greece. After serving in that spot for a term or more, he took on the job as Executive Director of the United Nations Childrens Fund, UNICEF in New York, and that is where he is today.

#### A Position With The Organization Of American States

DSM: Early in 1962 my good friends Albert Waterston told me that the Organization of American States or rather the subsidiary the Pan American Union were planning to hire someone in the administrative field to develop some studies and procedures and to serve those countries interested in the modernization of their administrative organization and procedures. This was an entirely new approach on the part of the Pan American Union. Al told me that he had recommended me for the job. Following an interview in January with Dr. Walter Sedwitz and Senor Alvaro Magana and others, I accepted an appointment as a consultant under a one-year contract beginning February 19, 1962. The contract had a proviso that the contract could be terminated by either party on sixty days notice.

The first few weeks were devoted to orientation and contacts throughout the agency, plus other agencies, and various groups, the reading of documents along with review, selection and procurement of published materials in both English and in Spanish,



in order to provide a working library in this particular area. A partial bibliography of available materials was prepared and made available to those interested. Liaison was maintained with related agencies including a division of public administration of the United Nations and the Agency for International Development.

I represented Dr. Sedwitz as a panel member relating to international assistance on the program of the American Society of Public Administration at their meeting in Chicago during the early days of my assignment. Arrangements had already been made before I came with the agency with the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs of the University of Pittsburgh for the preparation of two basic papers. The first paper, entitled "Administrative Criteria for National Development Plans" was completed in draft form in March of 1962. The second paper "Proposed Programs of Study and Research on Development of Administration in Latin America" was completed in late April. Both papers were carefully reviewed and some time was devoted in reediting of the first paper in cooperation with the University of Pittsburgh staff.

Much time during April and early May was devoted to preparation of detailed plans for a meeting of a task force which had been proposed and which was scheduled to meet for three days May twenty-third, twenty-fourth, and twenty-fifth. The planning included securing a list of prospective members, selection of members and making contacts with these people to try to get them to take on the job, the preparation of an agenda, and other essential activities that were necessary to prepare for such a meeting.

Dr. Sedwitz had told me that I was to be chairman of this task force, then just a few days before the scheduled meeting he told me that Dr. Gorge Sol Castianos, Executive Director of the particular area in the Pan American Union, whose initials were I.A. Ecosoc which had to do with economic and social development, had suggested that the chairman be elected by the members of the task force. I objected to this approach for the reason that I felt that anyone selected who had not been closely in touch with



the purposes and detailed planning would be at a loss in expediting the work of such a group. Dr. Sedwitz said that he would discuss the matter further with Dr. Sol Castinanos. In the meantime he, Dr. Sedwitz, was called away to a meeting in Europe.

Consequently, on the morning that the conference was to begin, May twenty-third, Dr. Sol appeared on the scene and turned to me and said "What arrangements have been made for a chairman?" I realized that Dr. Sedwitz had not discussed the matter further with him before leaving for Europe so I simply said that Dr. Sedwitz had told me earlier that I was to serve as chairman. This he immediately accepted and the conference got under way with a statement by Dr. Sol about the conference at Punt Del Este where he had been one of the people that had attended.

As the conference went along I arrived rather slowly at the realization that my immediate boss Senor Magana had been responsible for the proposal that the chairman be elected. Obviously he was very upset at the turn of events and seemed quite sulky and uncooperative throughout the whole three days. He did participate when called upon, but he did it rather unhappily, I thought.

We proceeded with the three day conference as planned, and had a most constructive and agreeable conference in spite of the fact that I sensed that Senor Magana was unhappy. The task force recommended a number of things. There were seven major projects for consideration which I will summarize as follows:

1. They proposed a survey to be conducted of three teams of two or three members each who would visit each of the twenty-one Latin American countries, consult with ten to twenty key leaders, at which time they would introduce and review the paper on "Administrative Criteria for National Development Plans" mentioned earlier which had been prepared by the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School. The objective would be to secure constructive comments about the paper which would be useful in connection with a possible revision. The teams would also review the most important problems or barriers affecting adequate





administration in these countries, to determine with responsible officials any needs for service which might be rendered by the Organization of American States in the development administration area.

2. A proposal for a conference or perhaps three group conferences of delegates from each country to discuss the basic questions and problems outlined in the paper "Administrative Criteria for National Development Plans" which would be held later in 1962.

3. Consideration of the establishment of a research documentation, translation and training center somewhere in South America.

4. Plans for an inventory and an index of past and current research and publications in the field of public administration and related matters.

5. The initiation of an overall study of autonomous institutes and agencies in regard to their relations, coordination and integration with the rest of the governmental structure and a similar study of financial control problems with particular reference to a review of accounting and auditing responsibilities.

6. The development of a publication of a simple and adequate conceptual framework for a sound personnel system and the same for a good budgetary system.

7. A determination should be made of whether an updating of the overall study of administrative problems similar to the Blandford study of the early 1950s should be carried out.

Following the conference I proceeded to prepare a summary report of the actions of the conference with the list of agencies and individuals' who should receive copies of such a report. This report was typed, and I prepared a request for duplication of the number of copies required. I very soon found out that Senor Magana had quietly vetoed my requests in this regard along with some other items which was, I'm sure he knew, most embarrassing and frustrating to me.



I came to the realization that he was going to do everything possible to get me to resign my job, because he was quite unhappy with me in this particular spot so I asked for a meeting and had a meeting with Senor Magana. After discussion for quite some time even though he wasn't completely frank with me, I came definitely to the conclusion he would block everything that I proposed if he could do so. I then went to Dr. Sedwitz and told him of the impasse and asked that my resignation be accepted as of July first. This was already late in June because I had been working to get everything in order before we sent the material out and it took me several days to come to the conclusion that I wasn't going to get the summary report duplicated. Dr. Sedwitz refused to accept my resignation, saying he wanted time to work out some other basis for continuing my services as an consultant.

As time went on nothing happened, so I fell back on the sixty days notice clause in my contract. I presented my resignation effective at the end of sixty days and I had little to do after July first. I couldn't get agreement to have my services terminated and since I was held by the contract there was nothing for me to do but stick around and twiddle my thumbs. As a matter of fact I did a great deal of reading during this period to fill in the time. The months of July and August were unproductive, and my resignation was not accepted until September first.

This experience of having been stymied and boxed in by a jealous and revengeful boss was a new experience for me and it was not a pleasant one. I realized, of course, shortly after I came on the job, that perhaps I had made a mistake by accepting the job since I was fourth man down on the totem pole. There was Dr. Sol Castianos at the top, Dr. Sedwitz, Dr. Magana and then myself. This was something that I had not been accustomed to for some time and perhaps part of the fault was mine.



### A Travel Interlude Then Further Assignments

DSM:        During late January and February and part of March 1963 Jenness and I took a trip to Hawaii, Fiji, American Samoa, New Zealand and Australia.

After our return from this trip and a few weeks of unemployment, I made a luncheon date with Frank Coffin who was serving as Deputy to the Director of the A.I.D. program. Frank had been an excellent member of the executive personnel review panel during August of 1961 which I had chaired and we had become good friends.

During the luncheon I asked whether it was against the law or policy of A.I.D. to hire anyone over seventy years of age. He laughed and said that he knew of no such law or policy. I said "I do not wish to embarrass you in any way but I believe that I have the ability to contribute something to the agency and I would be happy to serve as a consultant in any area where my experience and talents might serve best." He immediately said that I should be able to render real service in the area of research and technical services and he would speak to Dr. Baumgartner who had taken over the job that Harry Labouisse had planned for me and also explore other areas. As might be expected nothing developed in Dr. Baumgartner's area but only a few days later I received a call from the personnel office to ask that I serve on a personnel review panel. I accepted for part of May and most of June of 1963.

Soon after this, in late July, I had a call from David Stanley of Brookings Institution who told me that he had asked A.I.D. for some help from them on a study of the higher civil service in Government and it seems that he talked with Frank Coffin, who was acting at the time. Frank had told Stanley that they would make me available and agreed to pay my salary. So on August 5, 1963 I started to work with David Stanley at Brookings. My major job was that of interviewing a long list of civil servants in grades above grade fifteen both in Washington and in the field, and in preparing detailed reports on these interviews. I





was carried on the A.I.D. roles from August fifth until September thirteen and then transferred to the Brookings payroll under contract until October 25, 1963. The results of this study were published in November 1964 and authored by David Stanley with acknowledgements to those of us who had assisted in the study.

Following this assignment I was again appointed by A.I.D. as a consultant on November 4, 1963 to serve on a panel to review a long list of employees as a first move toward a selection out process. This work continued throughout the rest of 1963 and into early 1964. We completed the job and reported to David Bell in February 1964.

Jenness and I then started planning a European trip. In early July, Jenness and I, along with our eldest grandchild, Pamela Hall, toured Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, Holland, France and then spent six weeks in England and Ireland, returning about mid September, 1964.

Shortly after my return I was asked by the personnel director of U.S.I.A. to serve on a promotion review panel which was to review for possible promotion, the records of the foreign service officers who were at work in U.S.I.A. I learned that James Mitchell who was then working with the Brookings Institution, and who was a good friend, had recommended me for this spot. This assignment was interesting and enjoyable because we had a good panel, two of whom were members of the staff of U.S.I.A. and two of the State Department. I was the lay member not attached to any agency.

### I Do Some Writing

DSM: We finished this job in December 1964 and this, as it developed, was my last assignment as consultant in any of the governmental areas. So in 1965 after coming to the realization that I wasn't going to be



selected for further part time work I started writing a book which came to be entitled "Uprooted Americans" with a subtitle "The Japanese-Americans and the W.R.A. during World War II." The manuscript was completed in late 1966 and will soon be published by the University of Arizona Press. I would like to add that I had excellent help on this manuscript from four of my very good friends who served as readers and reviewed the document from time to time.

They were Helen Pryor, Philip Glick, Morrill Tozier (both of the latter had served with me in W.R.A.) and Mike Masaoka who at the time of W.R.A. was Executive Officer of the Japanese-American Citizens League and who has continued to be closely associated with the J.A.C.L. throughout the years.

The manuscript has also been reviewed by William Hosokawa, Associate Editor of the Denver Post, who made a number of constructive suggestions.

Upon its completion I wrote to Doctor Edward H. Spicer, head of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Arizona, an old friend and a former member of the War Relocation Authority staff. He asked that I send a copy of the manuscript to him for review and possible referral to the University of Arizona Press.

After reviewing the manuscript he recommended that it be published. The University of Arizona Press agreed. Consequently the book will come off the press early in 1970.



## CHAPTER XVII

## POSTSCRIPT - SUMMING UP

DSM: It was my good fortune to have been born of wonderful parents, and to have been reared on a farm at a time when thrift and hard work were virtues. The farm tasks and responsibilities, which were hard at times, were accepted as a major part of a farm boy's life. The work habits that were formed in early life were important assets in later years.

I have had the benefit of good educational training all the way from the one-room country school through college and post-graduate work.

I have been fortunate also in having good bosses throughout the more than forty years of public service.

All of my many jobs have been interesting and worthwhile. I have had the opportunity to visit most of the fifty states officially in the company of personnel who had an excellent knowledge of the people in the areas but they were also well versed in the nature of the flora and fauna. This kind of guide service could not be hired for love or money for it was available only among the well trained public servants who were agriculturists, conservationists and others well versed in the lore of the areas served.

In addition I had the opportunity to visit many foreign countries officially with the same kind of well trained escorts.

The two jobs which stand out in their contribution to my development are: my first job as a County Agricultural Agent in Vanderburgh County, Indiana, where as a young man of twenty-four years, I was on my own for the first time. I learned there that I liked working with people and my confidence in my own ability increased greatly. New vistas opened up for me as a result of that experience.



The second one came many years later when I took over the Directorship of the War Relocation Authority for four years in 1942. This was a tough job without precedents or guide lines. I learned many things for sure during that four years including the confirmation that many of the tenets which I had grown up with were still valid. Also the importance of planning and never giving up so long as there were stones unturned and that people of good will often came to the front more slowly than those of ill will but they stayed with it longer once they took hold.

During this period I lost all feelings of fear or insecurity that had occasionally been bothersome up to that time.

All in all, I have had a wonderful life with many opportunities for learning and development in my many jobs. On top of it all at age thirty-three I married a most wonderful girl. As a result we have a family that makes me very proud.





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